

MARVEL



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COMICS
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CONAN THE KING



DOCHERTY & BATOR.



BENEATH THE ROYAL PALACE OF CORINTHIA IN ARBITANA, KING DERYCK OF ASSGARD, NOW A CAPTIVE OF THE CORINTHIAN MAGE, CALIASTROS, PREPARES TO FACE PRINCE CONN IN MORTAL COMBAT. CONN HAS BEEN ROBBED OF HIS MEMORY BY THE MAGICIAN'S POWER. NOW IF DERYCK AND RUFIO HOPE TO RESTORE CONN'S MEMORY AND RESCUE HIM THEY WILL HAVE TO DEFEAT THE POWER OF...

CALIASTROS

KILL HIM
AND WE'LL LET
YOU LIVE!

CONN IS MY
BROTHER-IN-LAW
AND MY FRIEND,
BRAX-AL-THAR, BUT
I'LL FACE YOU IN
A FIGHT TO THE
FINISH. YOU CAN
CHOOSE THE
WEAPONS.

KILL HIM
FOR ME,
MY LOVE.

CONN! CONN!
LISTEN TO
ME! TRY TO
REMEMBER...

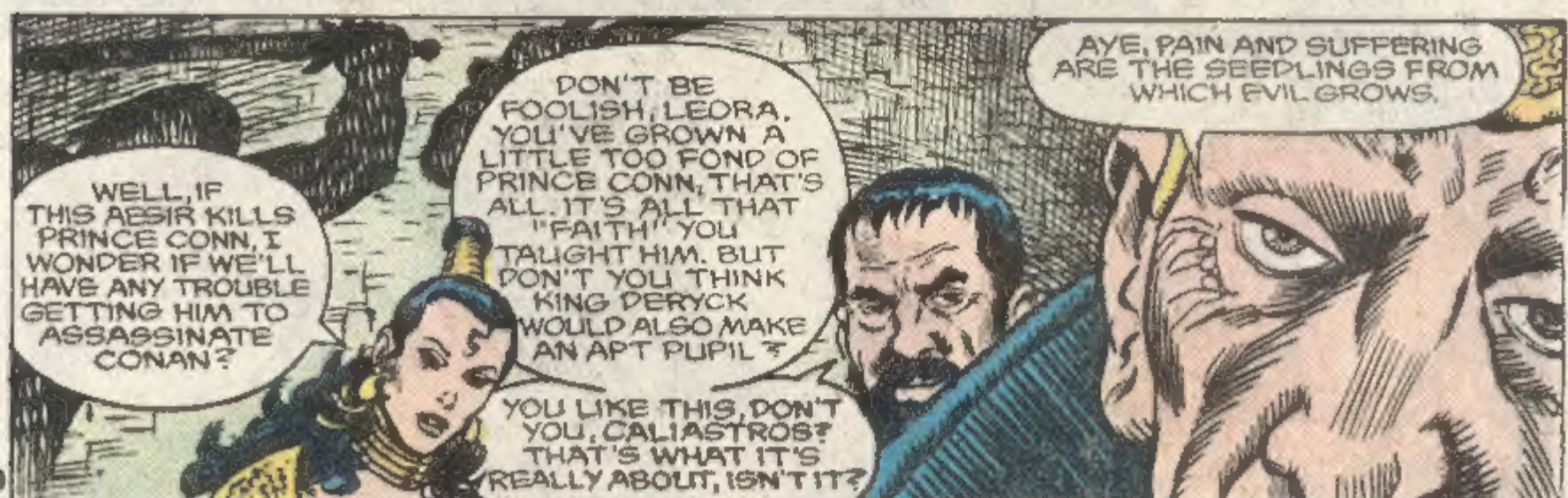
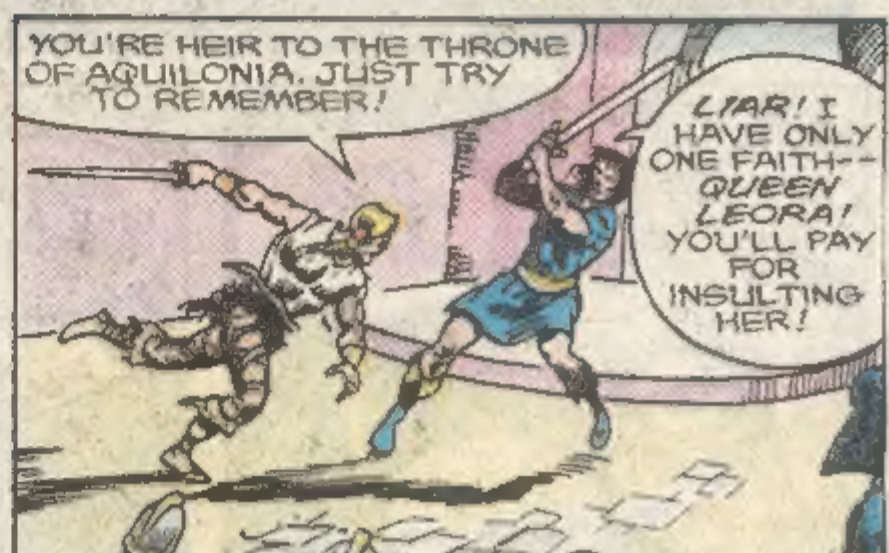
ENOUGH, JESTER.
YOUR PRINCE HAS
DRUNK FROM "THE WATERS
OF FORGETFULNESS". ALL
HE REMEMBERS IS HIS
LUST FOR QUEEN
LEORA.

DON KRAAR WRITER MIKE DOCHERTY PENCILS FRAJA BATOR INKS

JANICE CHIANG LETTERS GEORGE ROUSSOS COLORS PAT REDDING MANAGING EDITOR

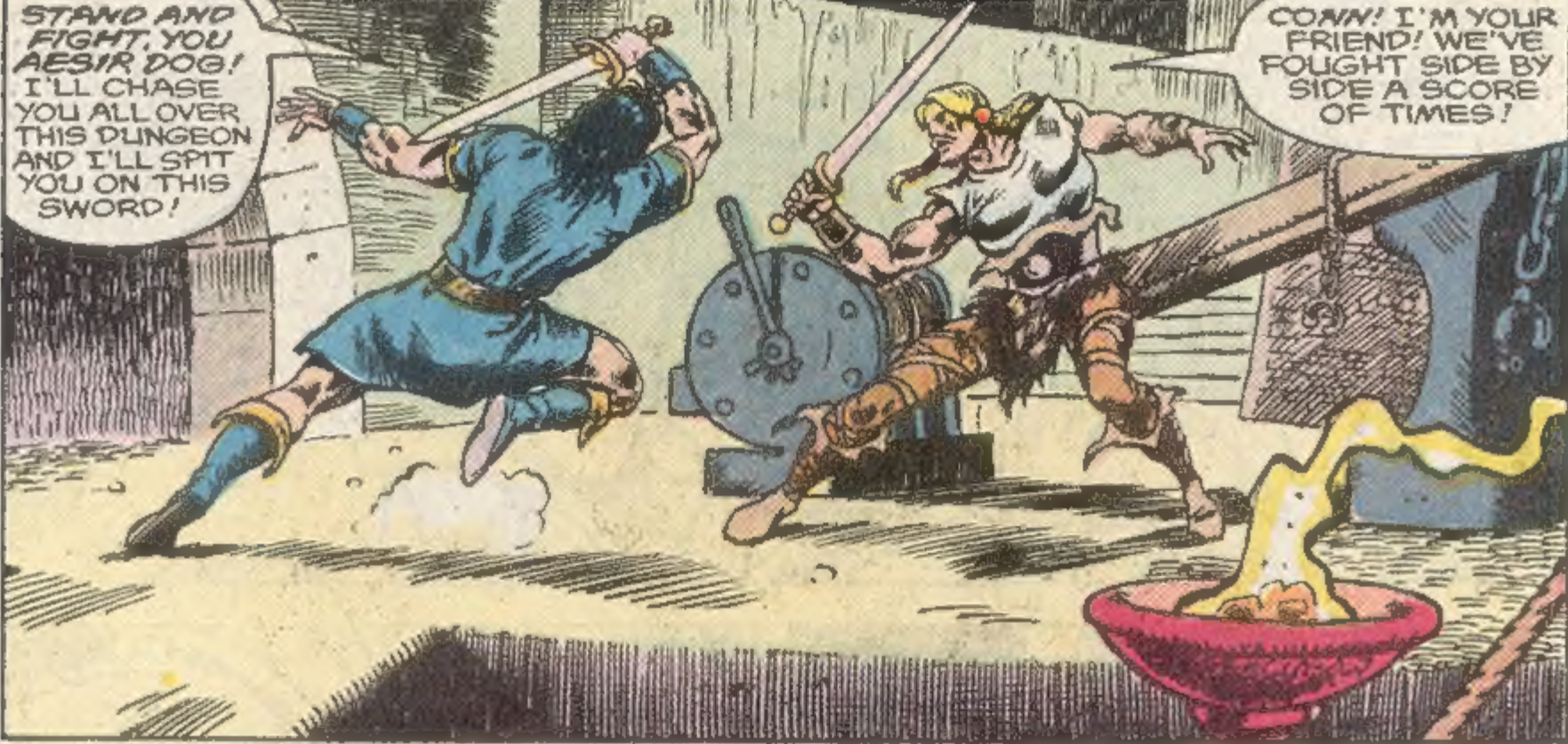
MICHAEL HIGGINS EDITOR TOM DE FALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF





STAND AND FIGHT, YOU AESIR DOG! I'LL CHASE YOU ALL OVER THIS DUNGEON AND I'LL SPIT YOU ON THIS SWORD!

CONN! I'M YOUR FRIEND! WE'VE FOUGHT SIDE BY SIDE A SCORE OF TIMES!



WHAT HAS THAT MINX DONE TO YOU?

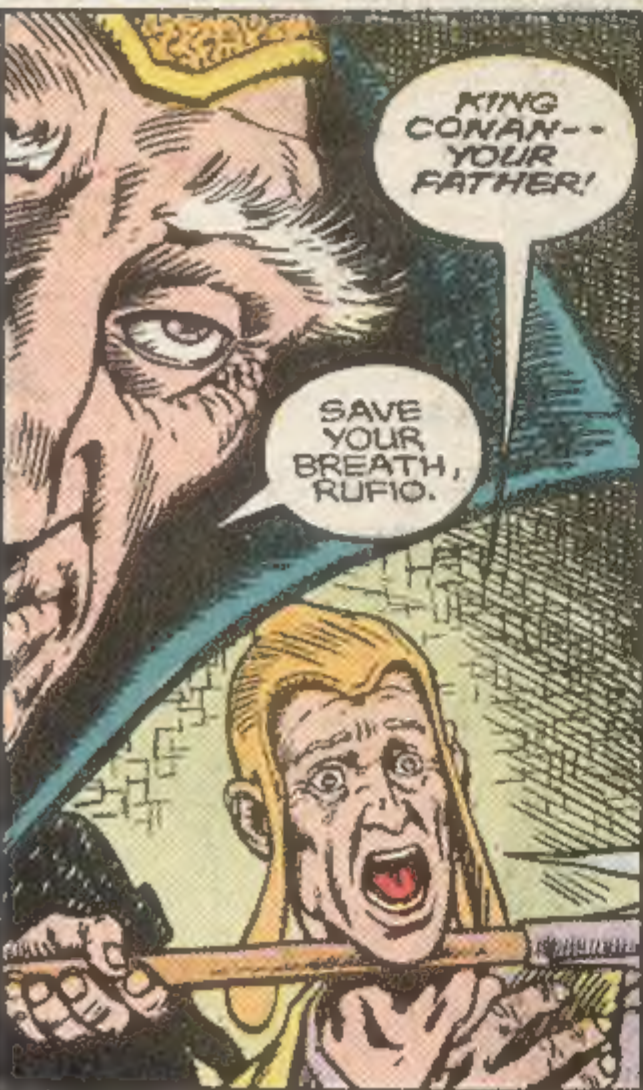
LIES! ALL LIES! I'LL CUT OUT YOUR VILE TONGUE!

CONN! YOU'RE PLAYING INTO CALIASTROS' HANDS! HE WANTS YOU TO MURDER KING CONAN!



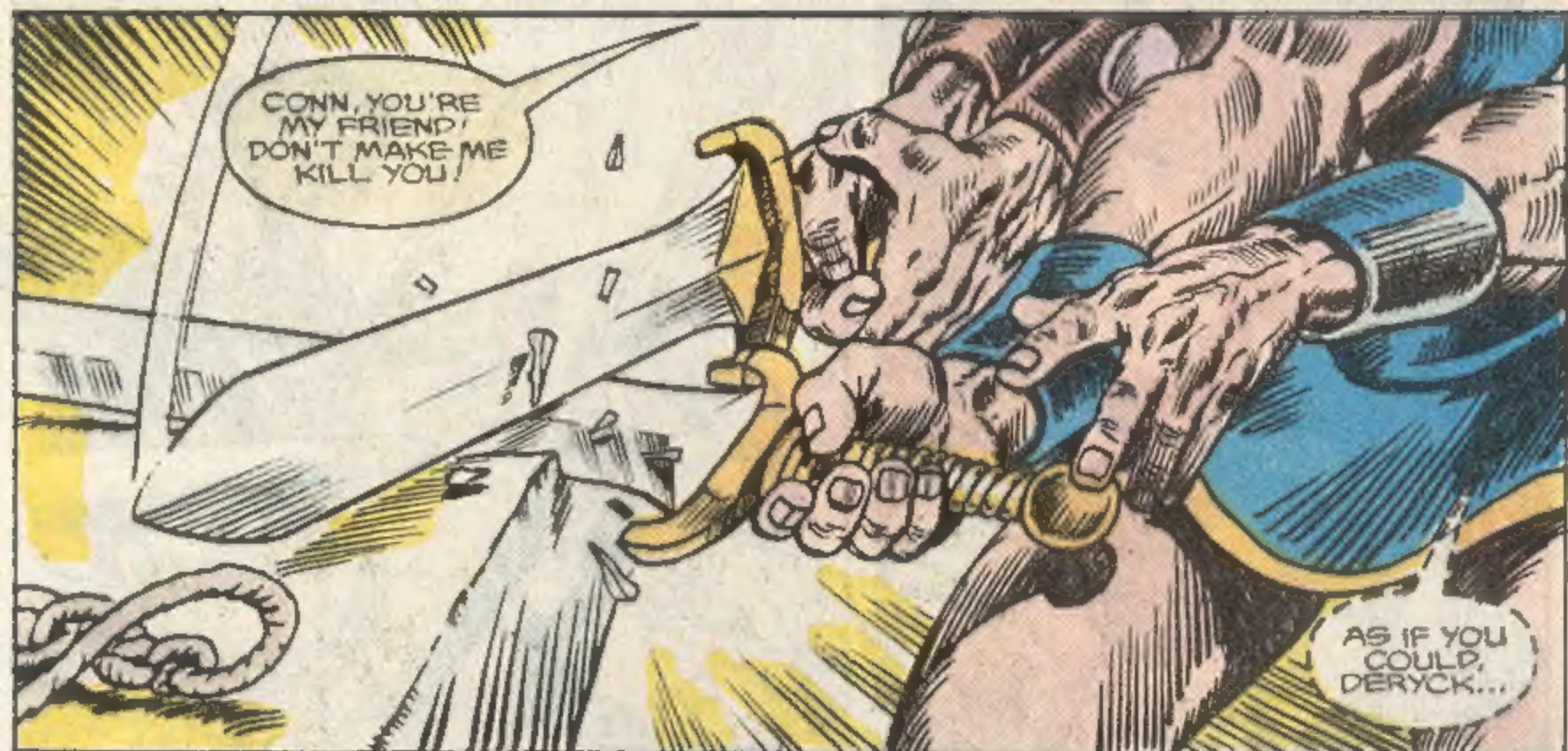
KING CONAN-- YOUR FATHER!

SAVE YOUR BREATH, RUFIO.



FACE ME LIKE A MAN, BARBARIAN!





AS IF YOU
COULD,
DERYCK...



WHAT...?
WHAT DID
YOU SAY?

I'VE KNOWN WHO
I AM FOR THE LAST
THREE DAYS, EVER
SINCE I STOPPED
DRINKING THAT
MISERABLE
DRUGGED WINE.

IF WE'RE
GOING TO GET
OUT OF HERE...



...WE'VE GOT
TO MAKE THIS
LOOK GOOD!



ENOUGH OF
THIS MADNESS!
YOU WANT TO DIE,
AQUILONIAN?
ARROGANT FOOL!

THE AESIR
HAS GIVEN UP
TRYING TO REASON
WITH CONN,
CALIASTROS.

HOW TOUCHING.
WE'LL HAVE SOME REAL
ENTERTAINMENT NOW.

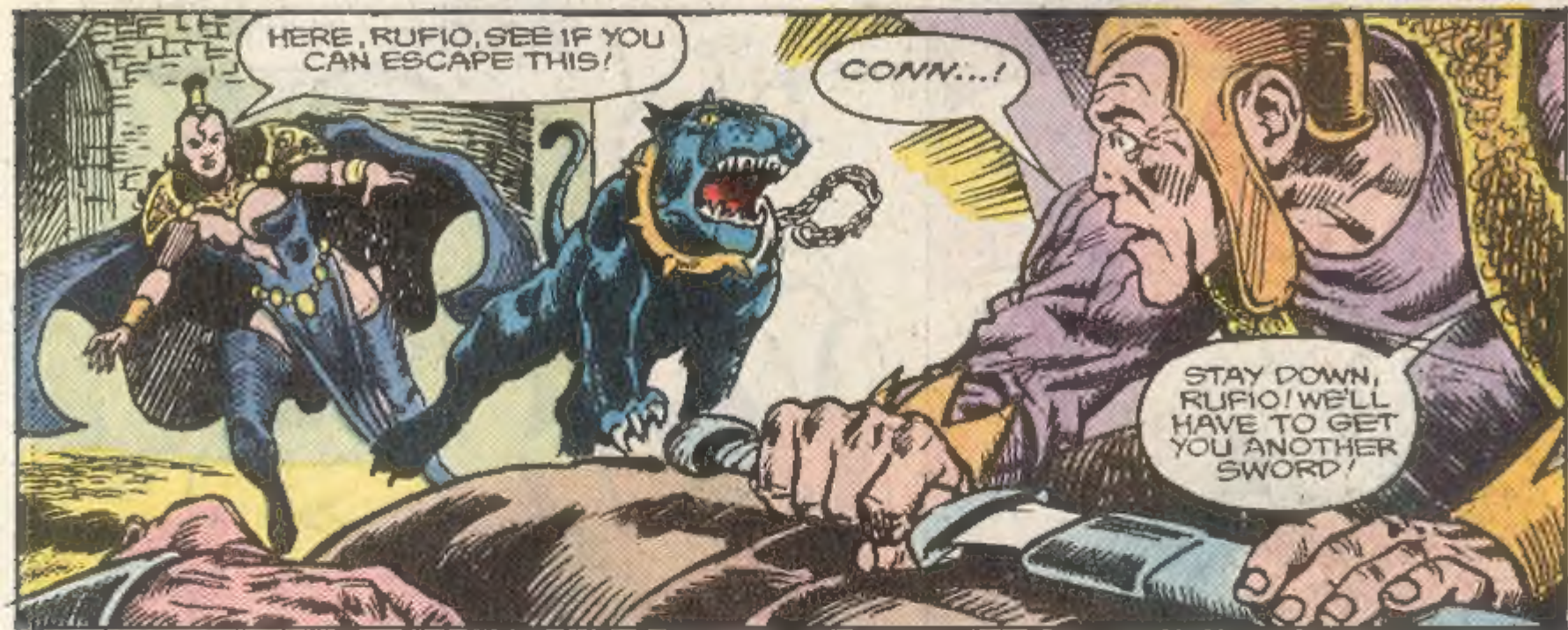


NO, DERYCK!
YOU MUSTN'T
KILL HIM!

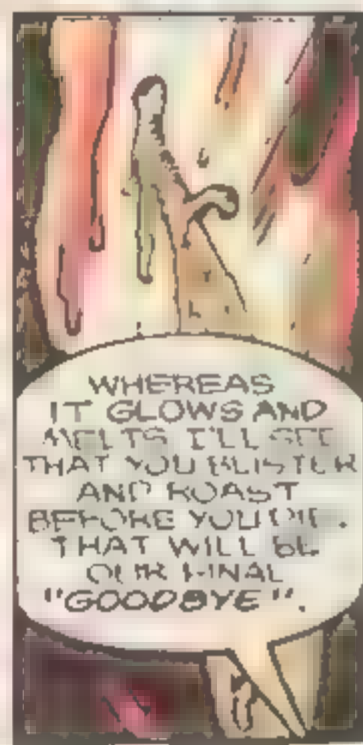
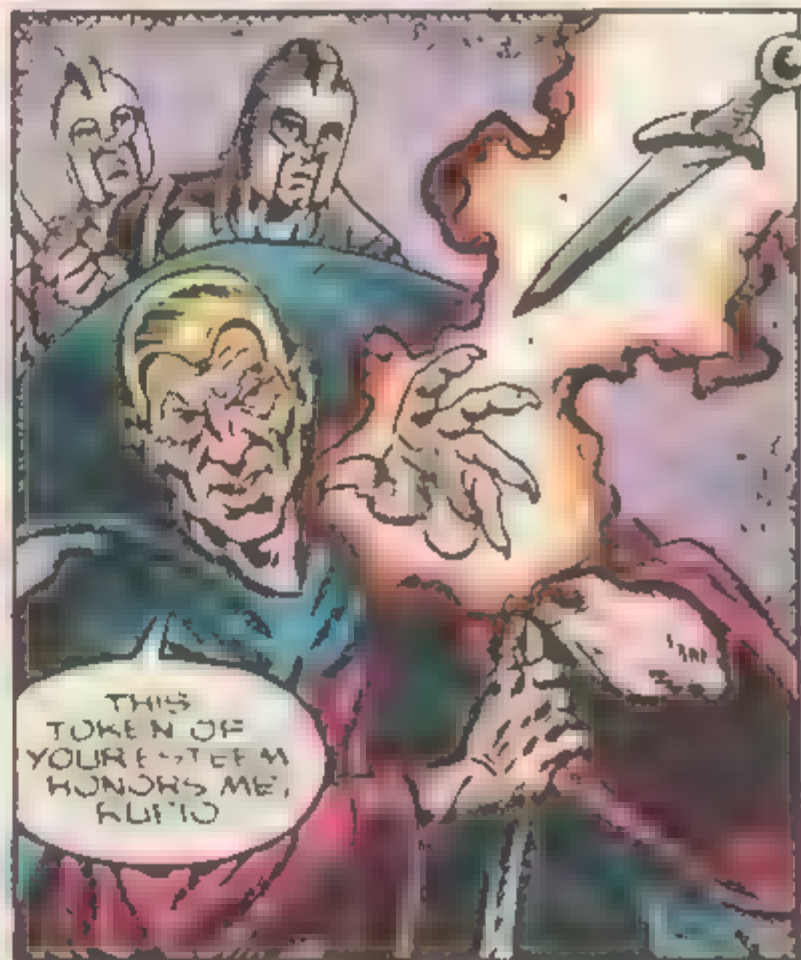
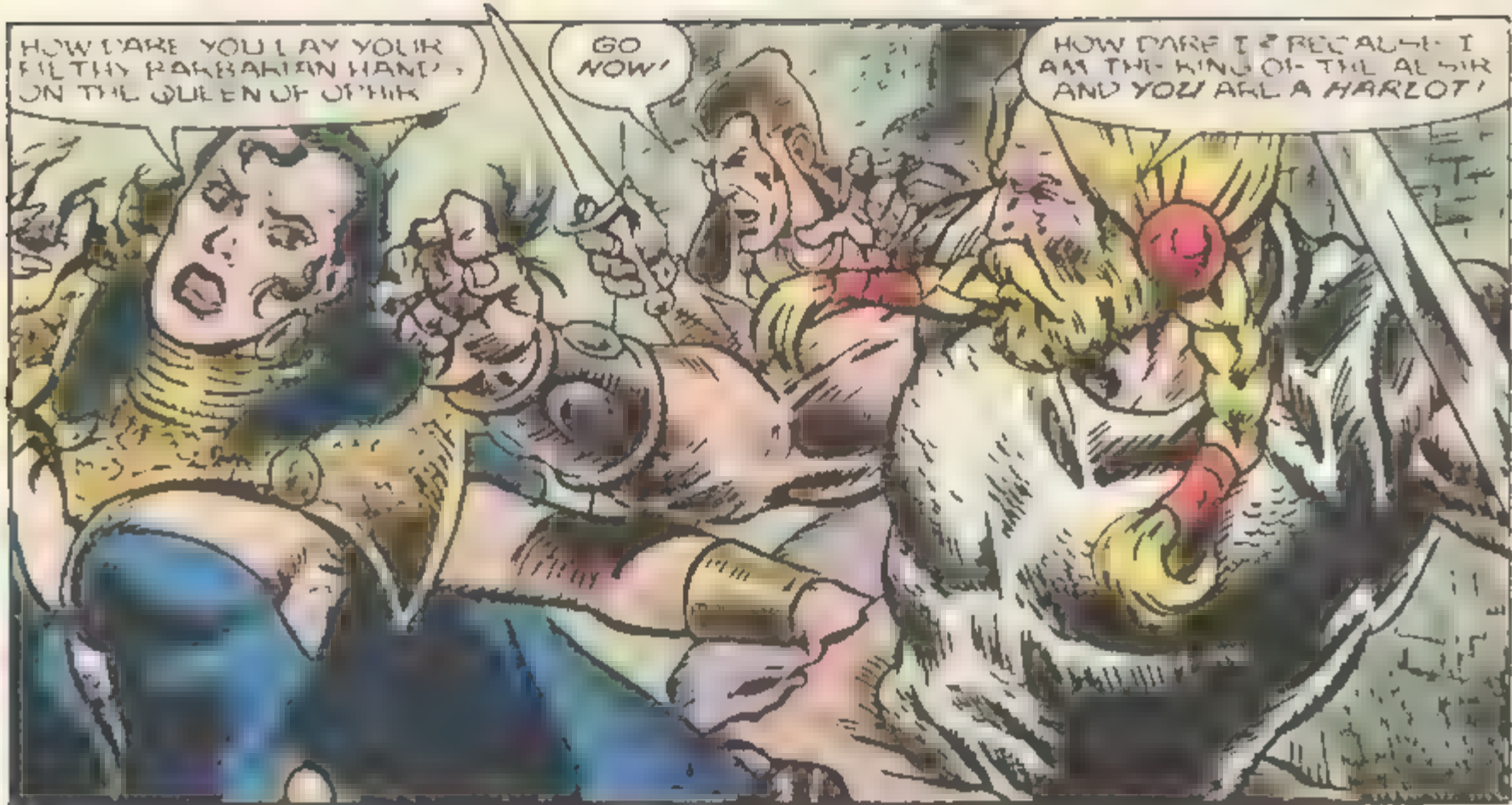
IT'S SKILL
OR BE KILLED,
RUFIO! HIS LIFE
OR MINE!

THAT'S
MORE
LIKE IT.









AND YOUR ASHES WILL BLOW TO THE FOUR WINDS. FIRST YOU WILL REVEAL THE HIDING PLACE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OF CORINTHIA. THEN, AND ONLY THEN, I WILL ALLOW YOU TO DIE.

GO ON AFTER THEM!

YES, CAPTURE THEM! POSTHASTE! I HAVE MUCH OTHER THINGS TO DO

FOLLOW THEM, BRAX. BRING QUEEN LEORA BACK! THEN, SHE MIGHT GET OVER THE FACT THAT SHE LOATHES THE SIGHT OF YOU!

MEANWHILE, I SHALL PLAN KING CONAN'S DOWNFALL YES YES, THAT'S A LOVELY WAY TO PASS THE TIME.

ELFIO, I HOPE YOU CAN LEAD US OUT OF HERE.

IF ANYONE CAN, I CAN, MY FRIEND! I WAS BORN IN THIS PALACE

AND I'VE KNOWN THESE SECRET PASSAGES SINCE I WAS A BOY

WHEN CALIASTROS
CATCHES YOU,
HE'LL ROAST YOU
ALIVE, ALL OF YOU!

THERE --
JUST AS I
REMEMBERED
IT

HURRY!

KEEP THAT
ROYAL TROLLOP
QUIET, DERYCK!

JUST GET
ME SOME
RAGS AND
I'LL GAG
HER

WHAT IS THIS
"PLACE RUFIO"?
WHAT IS THIS
STRANGE LIGHT?

THIS IS THE ENTRANCE
TO THE LABYRINTH, THE
MAZE UNDER THE PALACE
AND THE CAVERNS BELOW.
WE WON'T NEED TORCHES
THE WALLS ARE
PHOSPHORESCENT

WILL YOU
GET ME SOME
RAGS BEFORE HER
MAJESTY CHEWS
MY HAND OFF?

THERE -- WE WON'T HAVE
TO LISTEN TO YOUR VILE
TONGUE ANY MORE

CONN
DERYCK,
LOOK...

WHERE
DO WE GO
NOW?

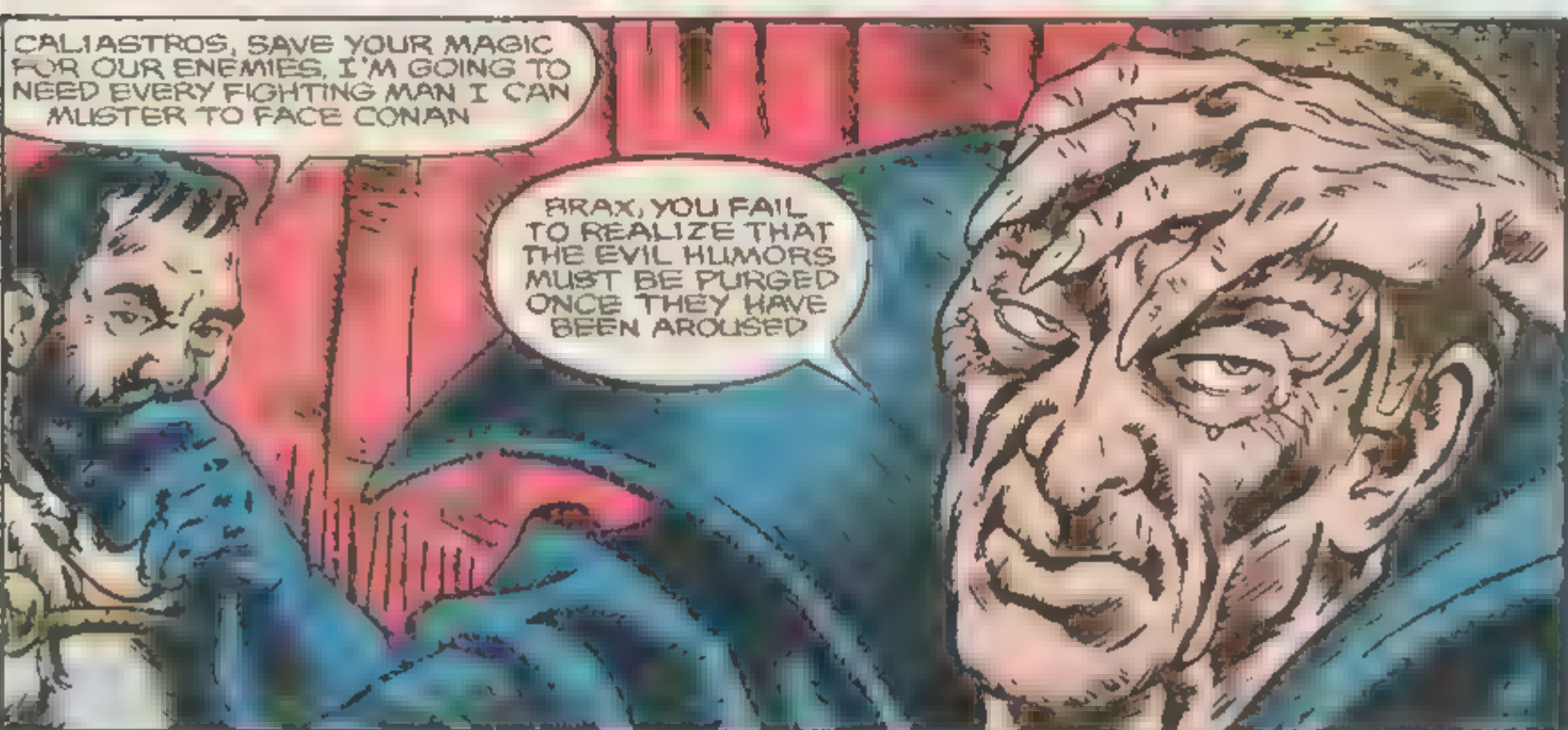
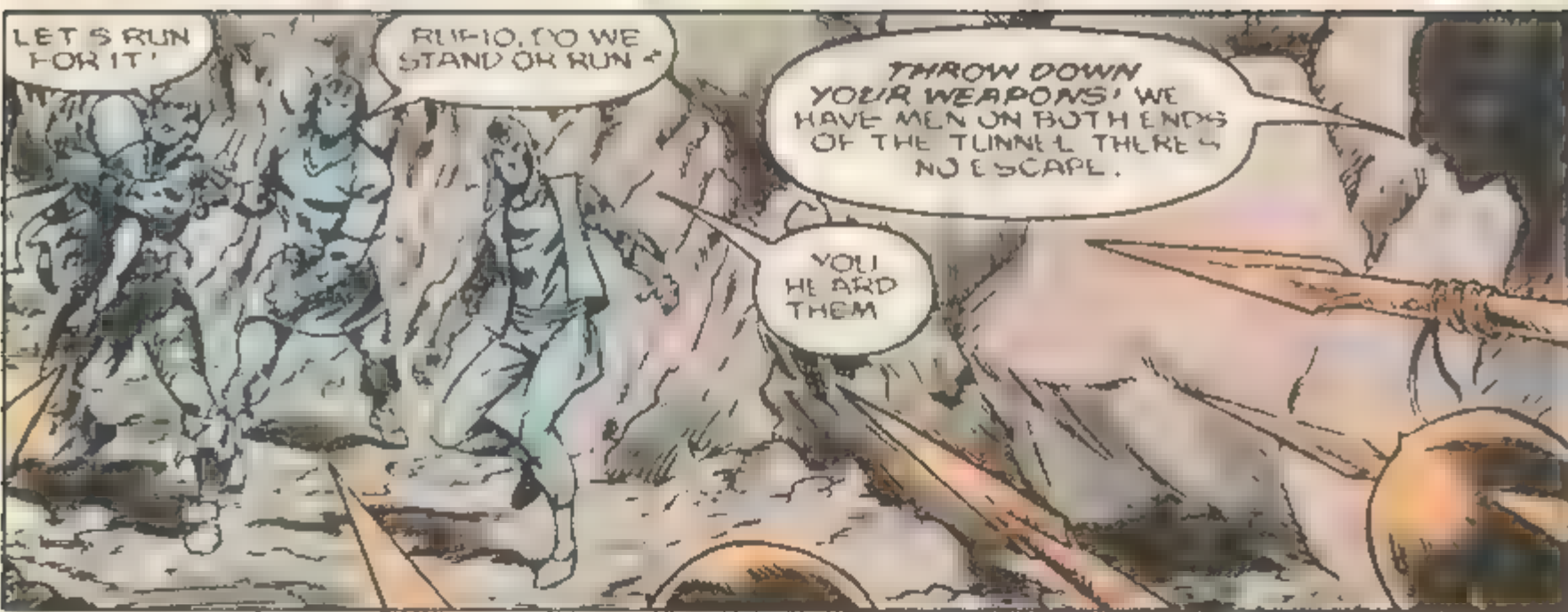
WE
FOLLOW
RUFIO.

I HAVEN'T
BEEN HERE
FOR FIVE YEARS
BUT I KNOW
THE WAY

WAIT... I HEAR
SOMETHING...

FOOTSTEPS!

AT LEAST
A DOZEN MEN --
WE'LL BE
OUTNUMBERED





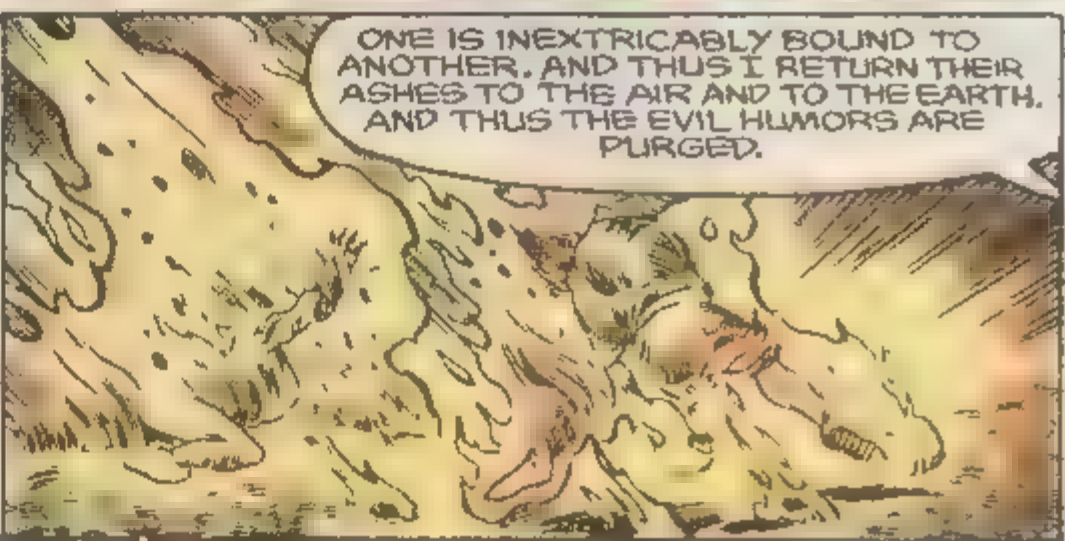
AN ARCAINE POWER,
ONCE ACQUIRED, MUST
BE EXERCISED, OR IT
TURNS WITHIN...



THE BASIC
ELEMENTS
THAT ARE THE
FOUNDATION OF
MAGIC ARE AIR
WATER.



...FIRE,
AND
EARTH...



ONE IS INEXTRICABLY BOUND TO
ANOTHER. AND THUS I RETURN THEIR
ASHES TO THE AIR AND TO THE EARTH.
AND THUS THE EVIL HUMORS ARE
PURGED.



THAT WASN'T
NECESSARY,
CALIASTROS. I
DON'T CARE WHAT
EXCUSES YOU
MAKE.

BUT I SO
DISLIKE
RECEIVING
BAD NEWS.



WHOSE
IS THE
POWER
HERE?



YOU KNOW BETTER THAN
TO TRUST WITH ME
BECAUSE WE KNOW YOU
ARE NOT TRUSTWORTHY

YOU NEVER MISS AN
OPPORTUNITY TO
TELL ME



YOU RECAPTURE PRINCE
CONN AND HIS FRIENDS
BEFORE THEY CAN TELL KING
COWAN THAT EVERYTHING
AND THEN BEFORE A NEW
JURY MEETS OUR ALLIANCE

AYE



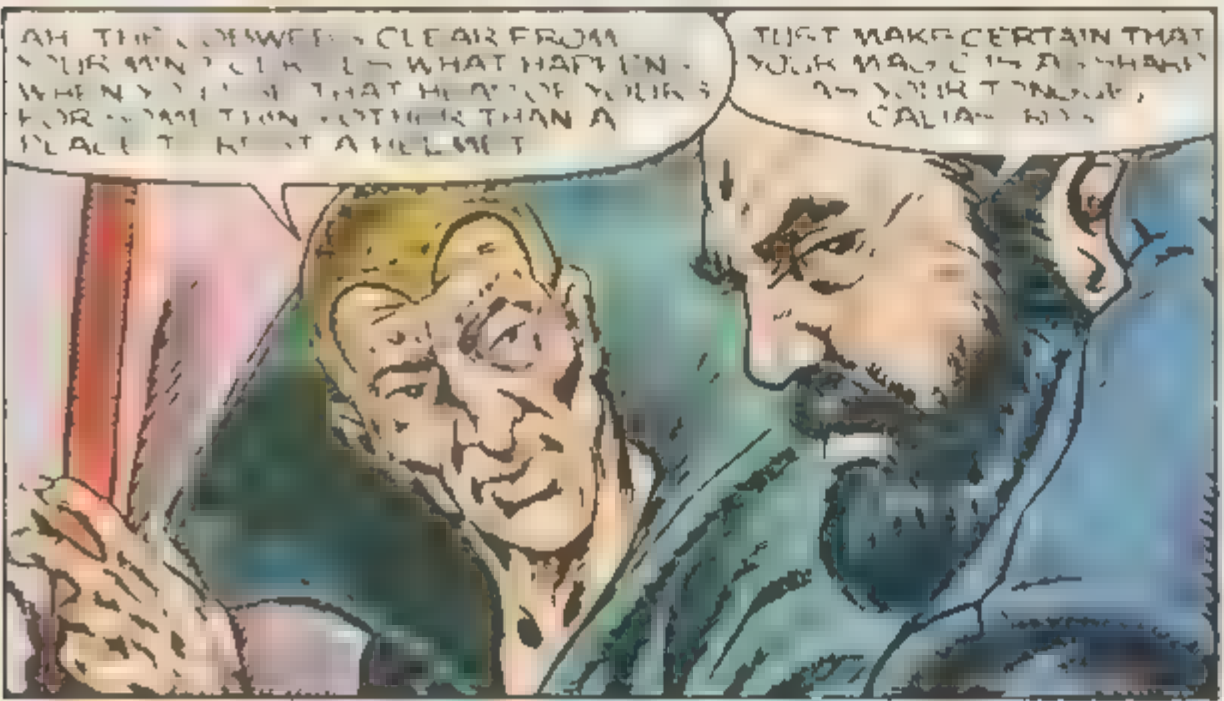
BUT WHAT
IF THEY
ESCAPE?

THEY WILL
LOSE THE
ELEMENTS
WHICH
WILL
BE THE
BATTLE



WE HAVE NO
CHANCE
TO WIN
IF WE
DO NOT
HAVE
THE
POWER

THE
OFFICIAL
ARMY
WILL
BE THE
BATTLE



ALL THE POWER IS CLEAR FROM
YOUR MIND. WHAT HAPPENED
WHEN YOU SAW THAT HEAD OF YOURS
FOR THE FIRST TIME OTHER THAN A
PLACE TO REST A HELMET

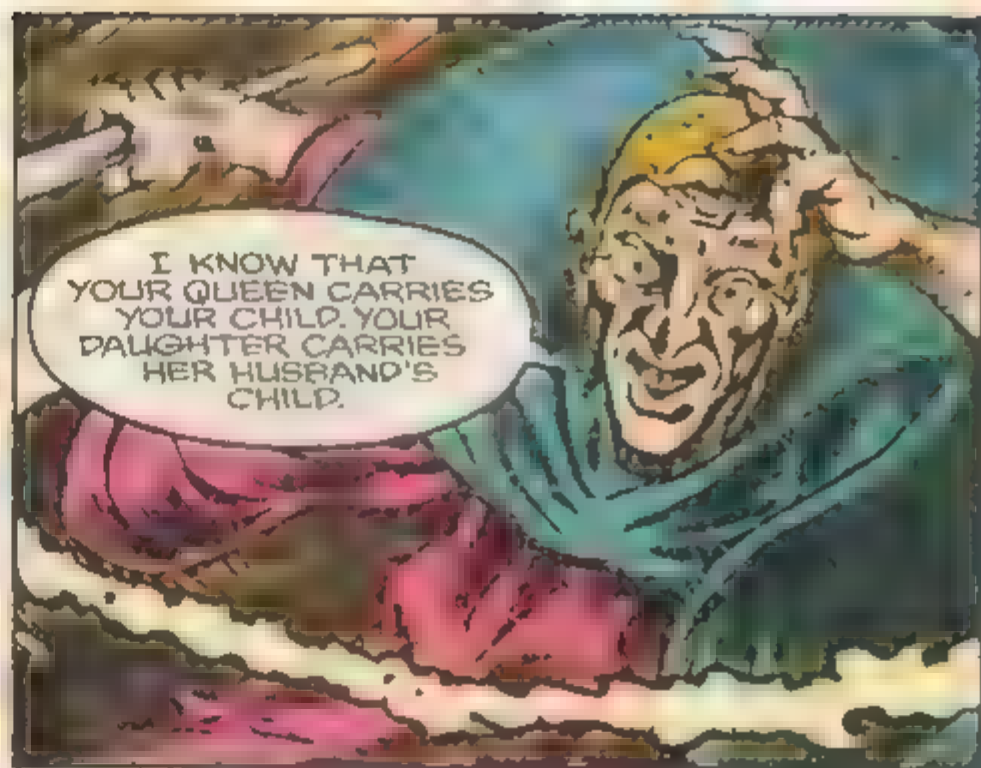
JUST MAKE CERTAIN THAT
YOUR MIND IS A WHOLE
AND YOUR TONGUE
CALIBRATED



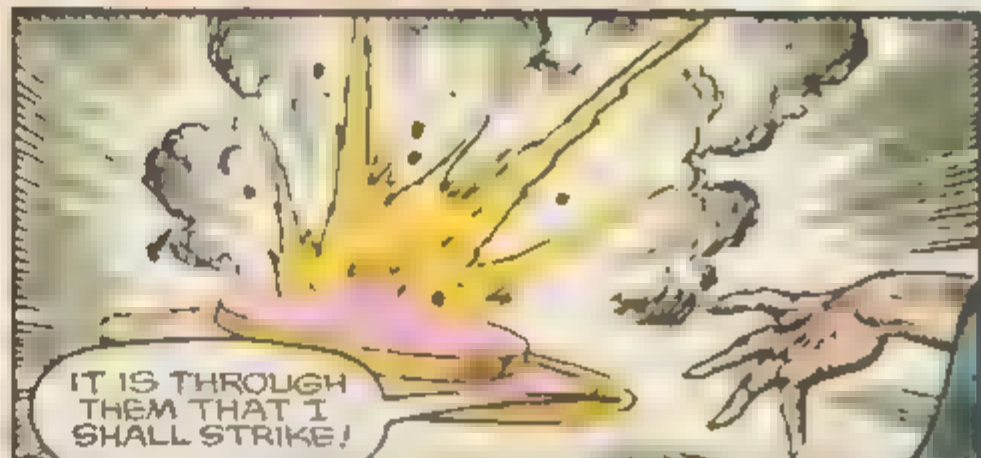
LEAVE IT TO ME
BECAUSE I SHALL HAVE
ANOTHER HEAD CUT
OFF. HE WILL
DRAW THE SWORD



IN
SECRETS ARE
NEVER SAFE
FROM ME,
CONAN



I KNOW THAT
YOUR QUEEN CARRIES
YOUR CHILD. YOUR
DAUGHTER CARRIES
HER HUSBAND'S
CHILD.



IT IS THROUGH
THEM THAT I
SHALL STRIKE!



YOUR
FUTURE
WILL
BE WITH
THEM



MY POWER
CAN CROSS THE
DISTANCE FROM
HERE TO
TAKANTIA



REMEMBER ME
THAT YOU'LL TRY
TO RETURN BEFORE
MY TIME COMES,
MY HUSBAND.

I KNOW NOT
WHAT THE FUTURE
HOLD FOR ME BUT I
WILL TRY. I MUST
BELIEVE THAT



AND I WILL TRY, CONAN.
I WILL TRY MY VERY BEST
TO DO MY VERY WORST.

COUNT TROCERO,
I BEG A WORD WITH
THE KING BEFORE
HE DEPARTS

VERY WELL,
BUT RATHER
CONAN ALWAYS
LENT AN EAR
TO WHAT YOU
HAVE TO SAY

HADRATHUS,
THIS IS NO
TIME FOR THE
REVELATIONS
OF A MRA.

KING
CONAN
PLEASE
HEAR ME
OUT
BEFORE
YOU GO

ENOUGH,
I'VE
I'VE HAVE NO
REASON
FOR YOUR
AT MY COURT
HADRATHUS
AND HIS
I HAVE COME
TO MY AND
MANY A
TIME IN THE
PAST

SPEAK UP,
HADRATHUS,
MY FRIEND

KING CONAN, I IMPORE
YOU NOT TO LEAVE THE
COURT AT THIS TIME. I
HAVE DIVINED AN EVIL
FORCE HOVERING OVER
YOUR HOUSE

STAY HERE
WHILE THERE ARE
HOSTILE ARMIES
THREATENING US
IN THE FIELD.
ASURAN? BAH!

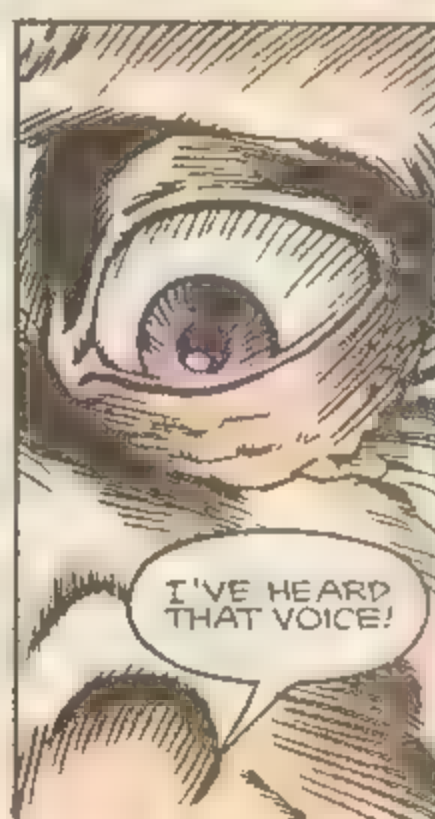
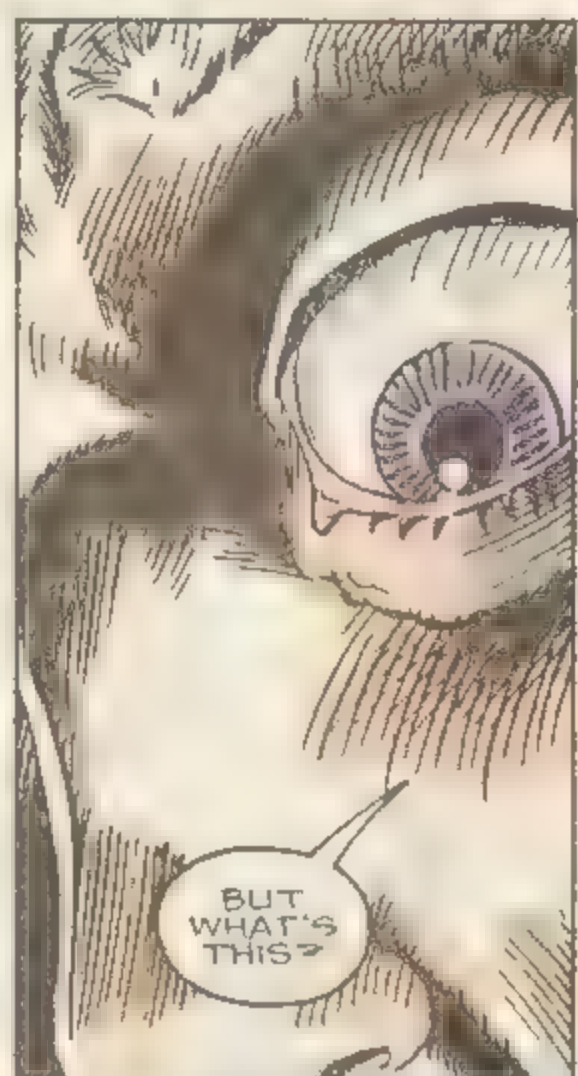
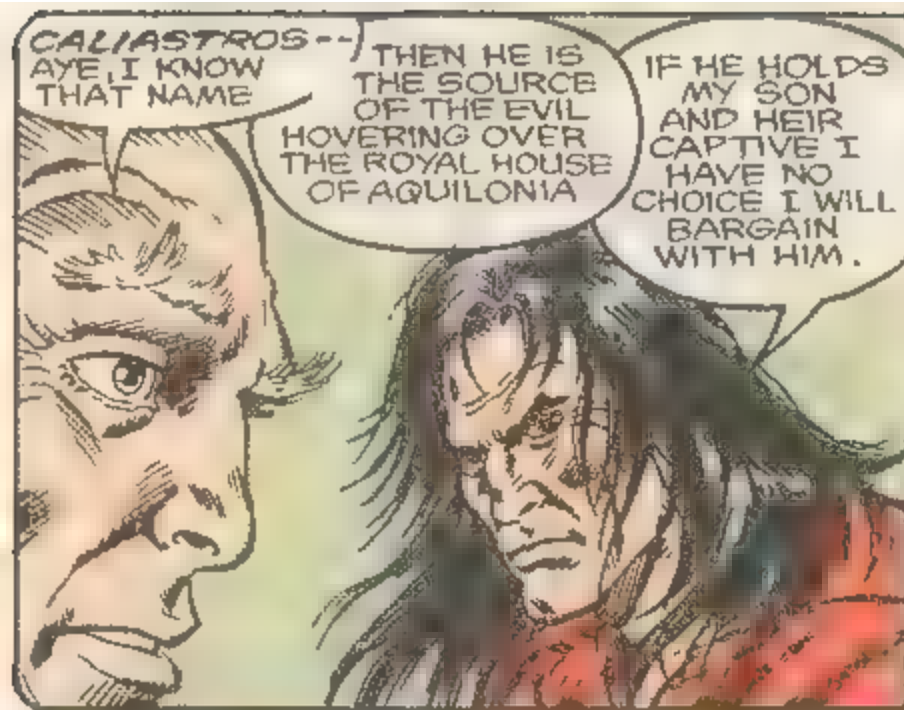
CONAN, THIS
ARROGANT
DOG DEMANDS
A WORD WITH
YOU

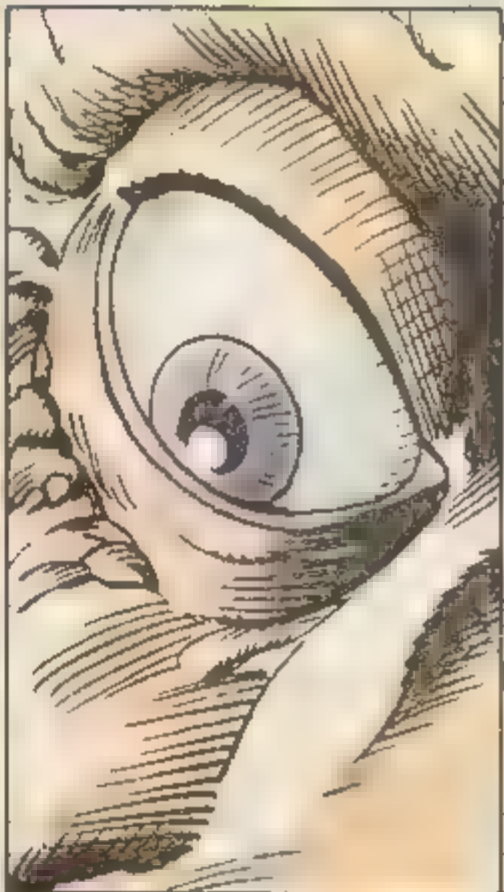
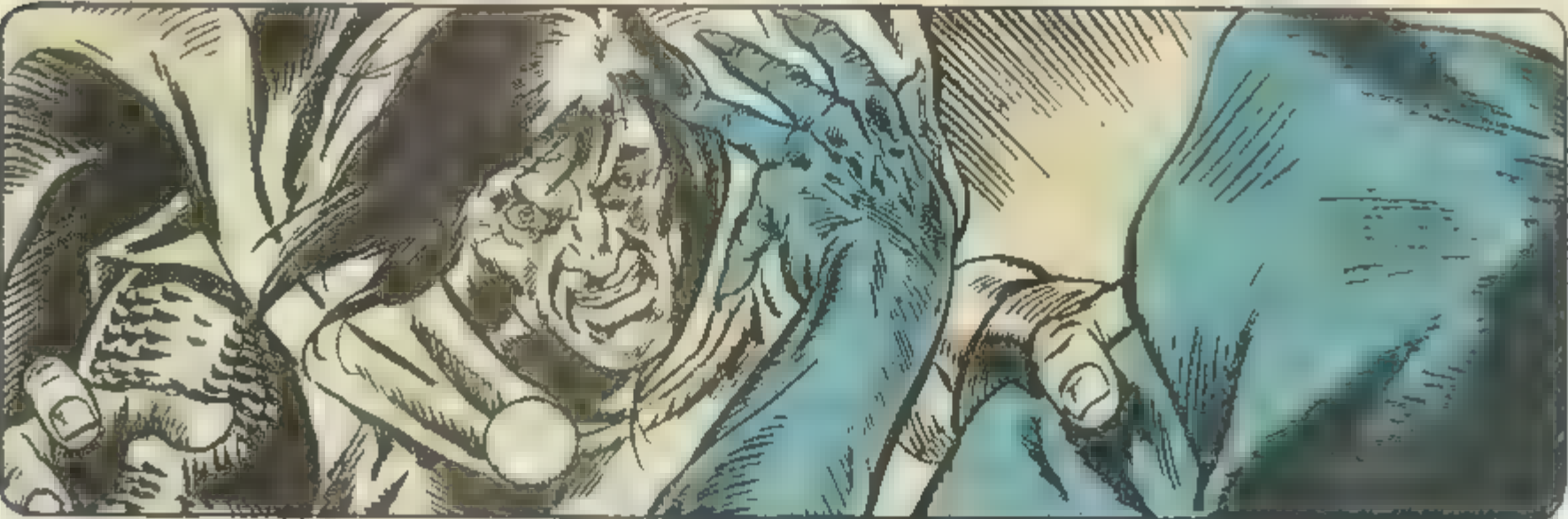
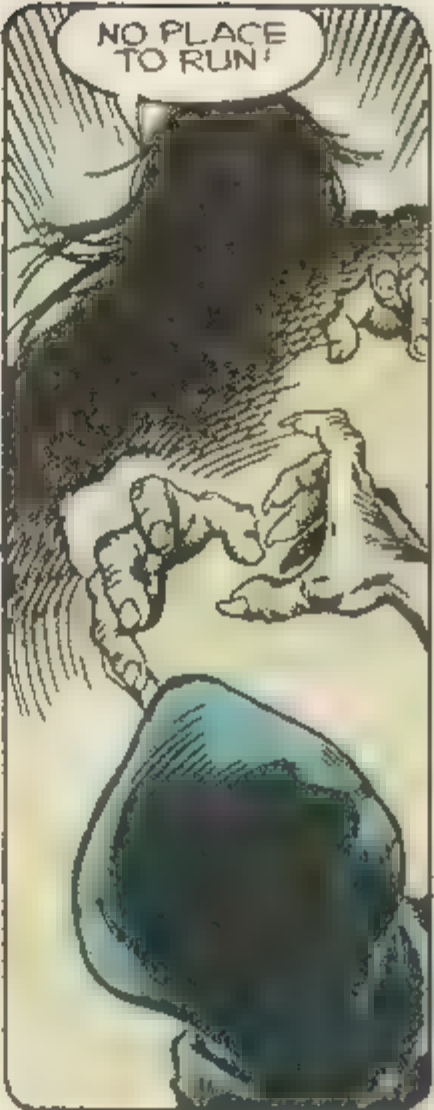
LET HIM SPEAK,
PALLANTIDES.

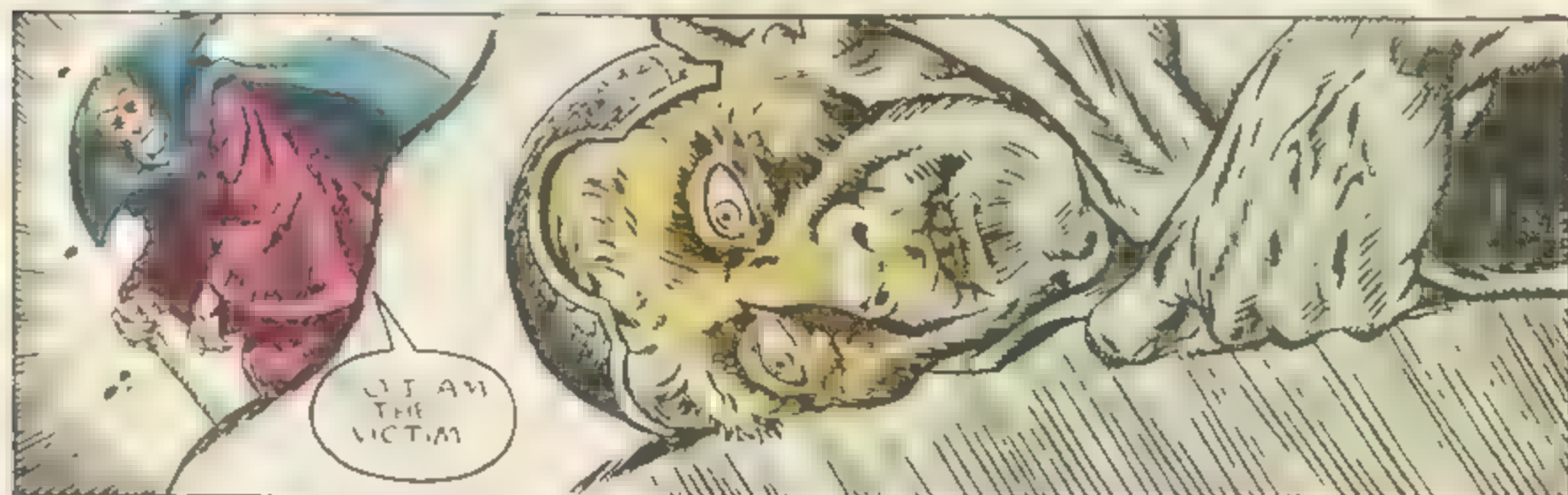
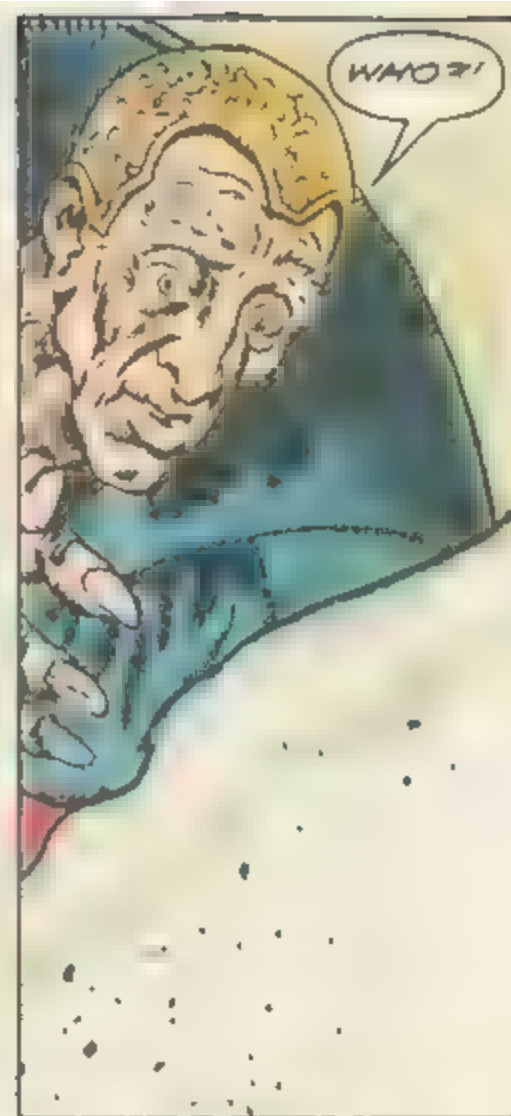
FRAN-AL THAR, THE
WARLORD OF KOTH,
SEND GREETINGS,
KING CONAN.

YOUR SON
PRINCE CONN
IS HELD
CAPTIVE BY
THE WARLORD
AND LORD
CALIASTROS

I'LL BE AT
THEIR BORDERS
IN THREE DAYS
I'LL BARGAIN
WITH THEM
FACE TO FACE.





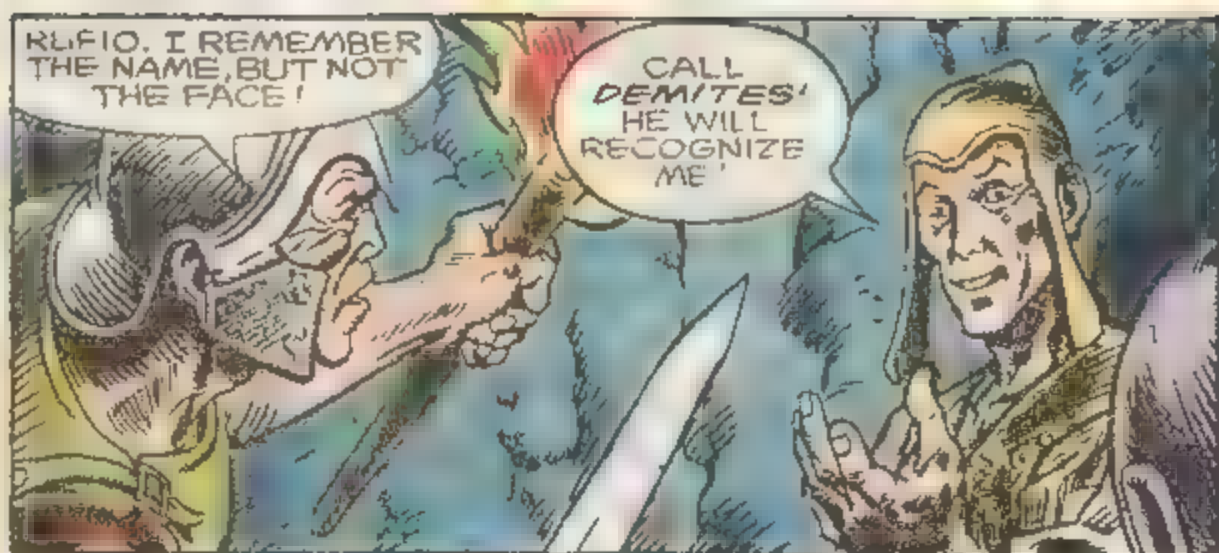


BENEATH THE ROYAL
PALACE OF CORINTHIA...



DON'T
YOU KNOW
ME? I'M
RUFIO! I
SWORE
I'D
RETURN!

RUFIO. I REMEMBER
THE NAME, BUT NOT
THE FACE!



CALL
DEMITES!
HE WILL
RECOGNIZE
ME!

THIS WRETCH
CLAIMS TO BE
RUFIO? HE
DOESN'T LOOK
LIKE MUCH OF
ANYTHING
TO ME!



DEMITES,
YOU ARE! YOU
ALWAYS HAD
HORSE MANURE
FOR BRAINS!

BUT THIS RUFIO
IS EVEN LICKER
THAN THE ONE
THAT LEFT FIVE
YEARS AGO

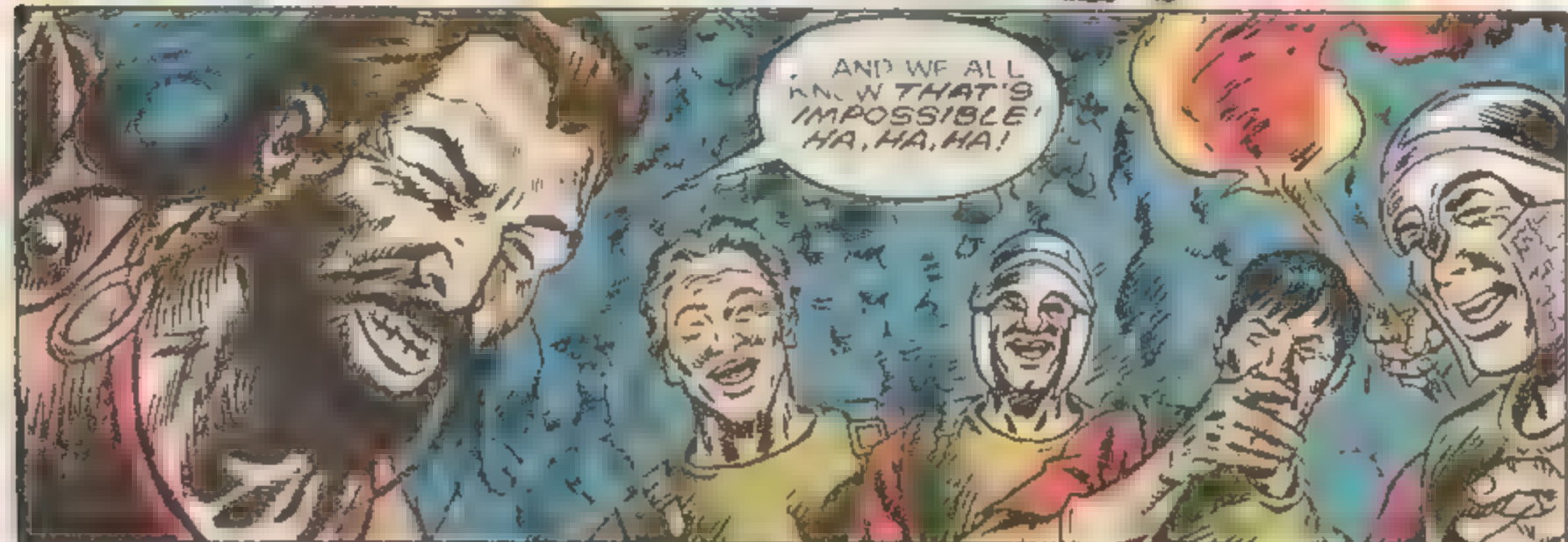
DEMITES WE'VE
KNOWN EACH
OTHER SINCE WE
WERE BOYS!

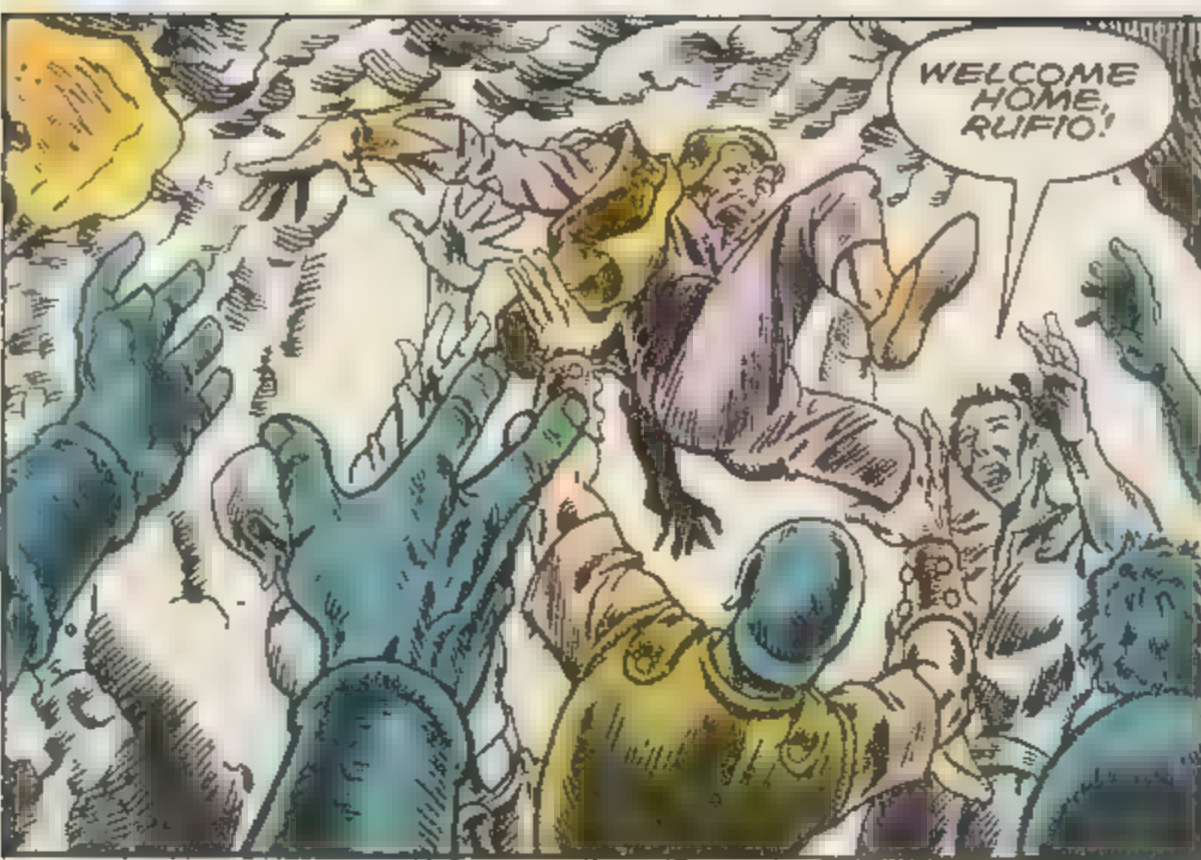


DEMITES, FOR
THE LOVE OF MITRA
IF I'M NOT RUFIO,
THEN WHO IS?



AND WE ALL
KNOW THAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE!
HA, HA, HA!





WELCOME HOME, RUFIO!



WELCOME BACK TO THE FIGHT, OLD FRIEND.

I'VE NEVER LEFT IT, DEMITES, YOU BIG LUMMOX!



I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU.

I SWORE I'D FIND HELP. I DID! IT TOOK FIVE YEARS. THIS IS PRINCE CONN OF AQUILONIA AND KING DERYCK OF ASGARD, SON AND SON-IN-LAW OF KING CONAN

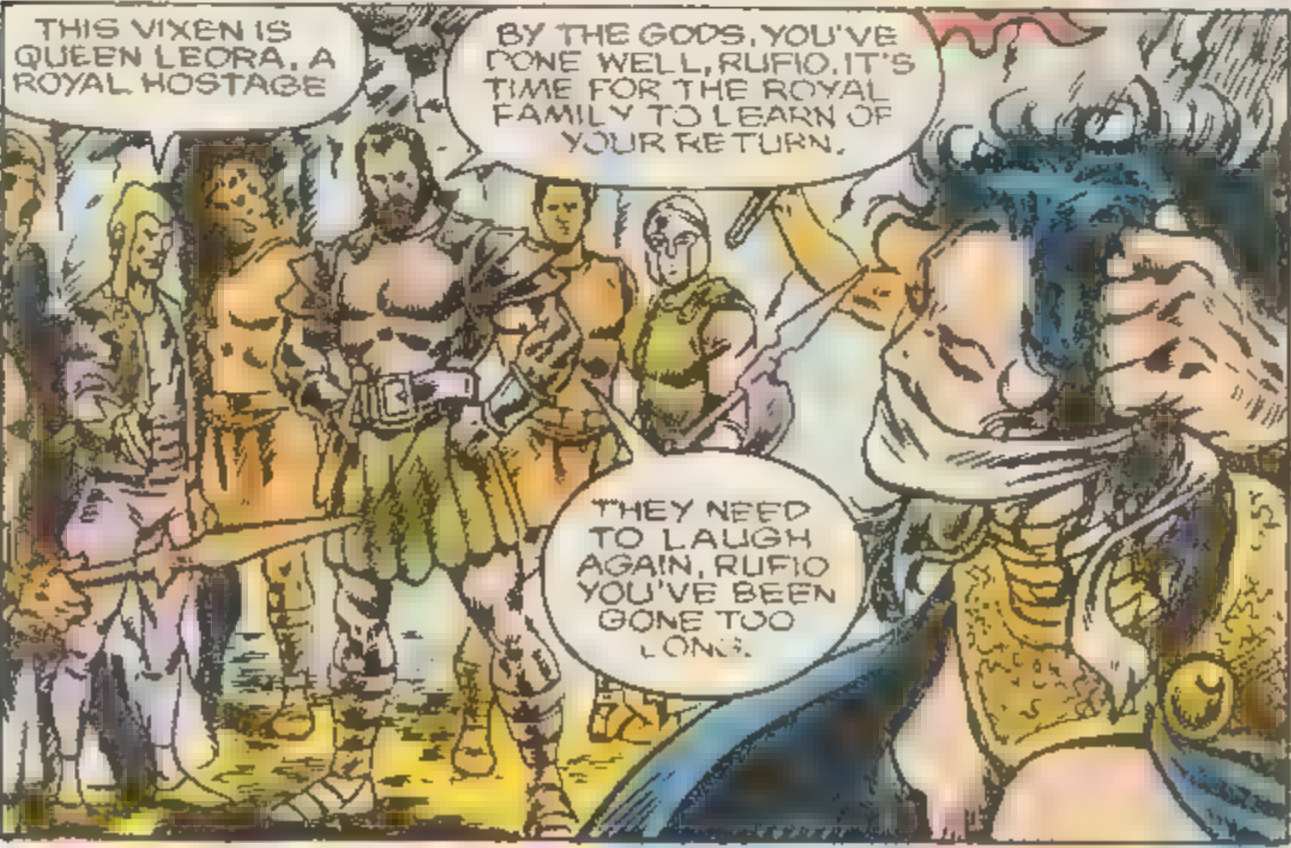
I'VE BROUGHT THEM TO CORINTHIA TO DESTROY CALIASTROS



CONN IS HE SAYING WHAT I THINK?

AYE, DERYCK. WE'VE BEEN USED.

RIGHT NOW, KING CONAN IS MARCHING TOWARD OUR BORDERS.



THIS VIXEN IS QUEEN LEORA, A ROYAL HOSTAGE

BY THE GODS, YOU'VE DONE WELL, RUFIO. IT'S TIME FOR THE ROYAL FAMILY TO LEARN OF YOUR RETURN.

THEY NEED TO LAUGH AGAIN, RUFIO. YOU'VE BEEN GONE TOO LONG.

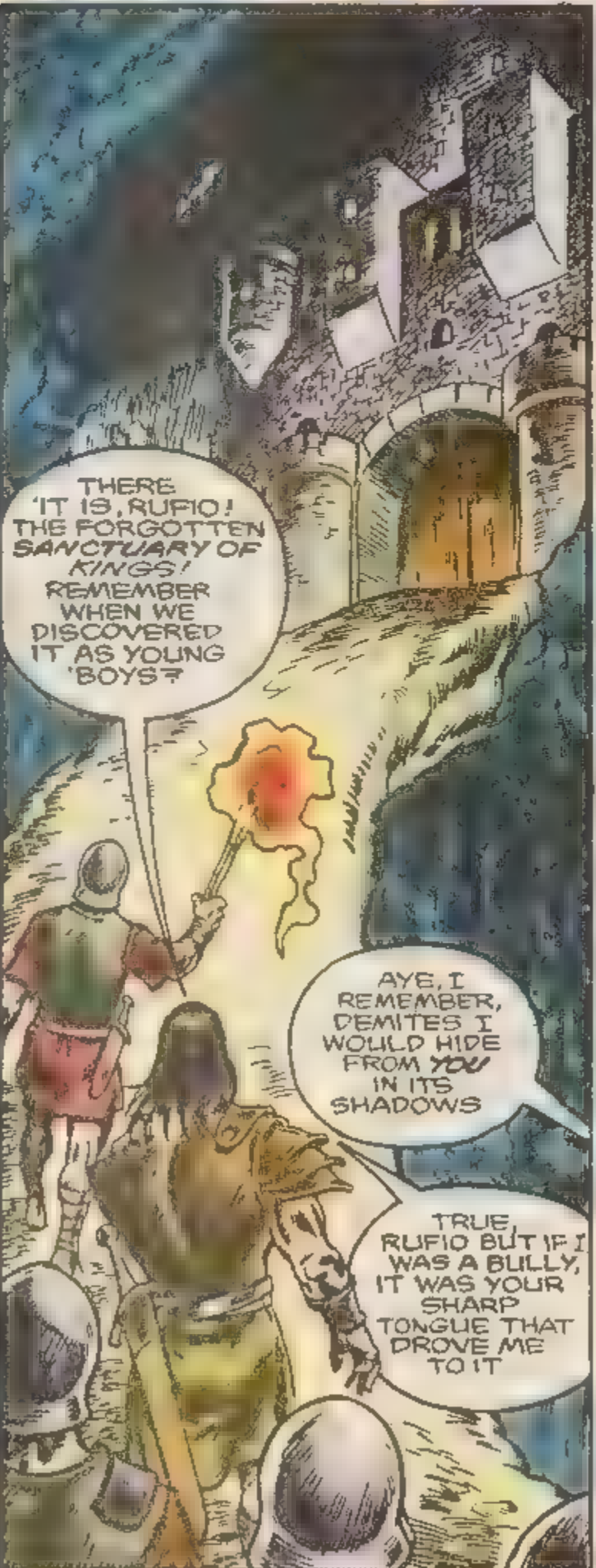




SO, RUFIO, YOU,
PLANNED TO
BRING US HERE
ALL ALONG?

AND DID EVERYTHING
YOU COULD TO INVOLVE MY
FATHER IN A WAR OF CONQUEST
KNOWING ONE DAY HE WOULD
COME TO CORINTHIA--YES!

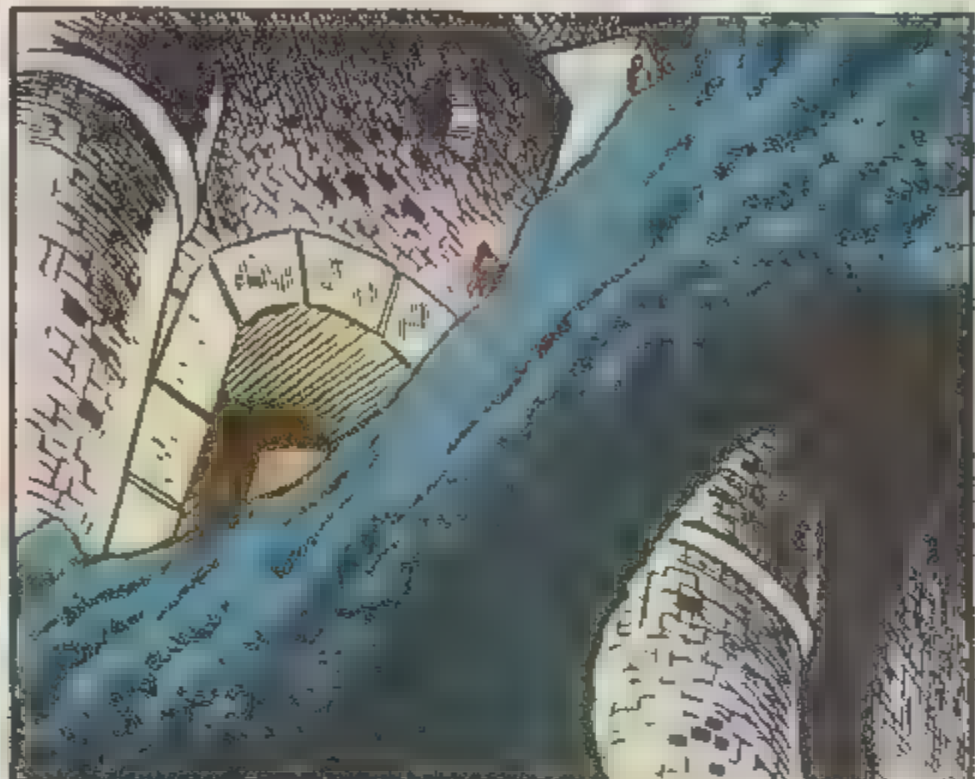
I DID WHAT I HAD TO DO.
ONE DAY YOU MAY UNDERSTAND.



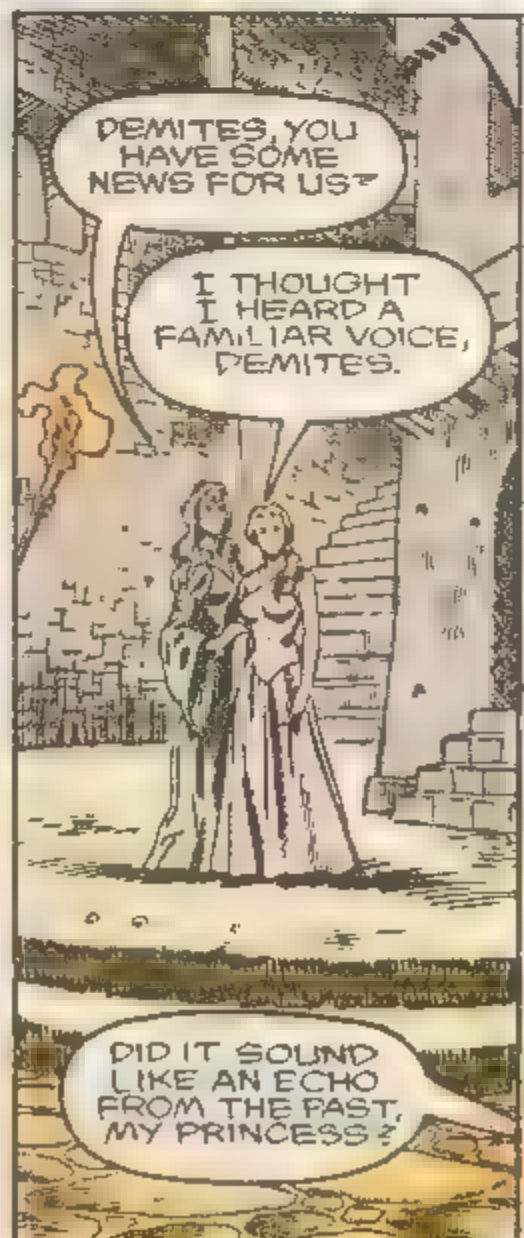
THERE
'IT IS, RUFIO!
THE FORGOTTEN
SANCTUARY OF
KINGS!
REMEMBER
WHEN WE
DISCOVERED
IT AS YOUNG
'BOYS?

AYE, I
REMEMBER,
DEMITES I
WOULD HIDE
FROM YOU
IN ITS
SHADOWS

TRUE
RUFIO BUT IF I
WAS A BULLY,
IT WAS YOUR
SHARP
TONGUE THAT
DROVE ME
TO IT



IT'S A GOOD
THING WE DID
FIND IT! IT WAS
THE PERFECT
HIDING PLACE
FOR THE QUEEN
AND PRINCESS
AFTER KING
AECHIDES WAS
SLAIN.



DEMITES, YOU
HAVE SOME
NEWS FOR US?

I THOUGHT
I HEARD A
FAMILIAR VOICE,
DEMITES.

DID IT SOUND
LIKE AN ECHO
FROM THE PAST,
MY PRINCESS?



THE FLAVERNS
CAN PLAY THE
FLUTE IN YOUR REARS!

BUT TODAY
SOMETHING
IS A LITTLE
RETURNED FROM
THE EAST TO
HUNT IS
LIKE TASTED
MEAT FROM
LAST NIGHT'S
MEAL!



YOU TEST
DEMITES

I THINK I
KNOW
MOTHER



WELLER
MY SON

RUFIO!

IS THIS A
DREAM?



RUFIO! I WAS RIGHT!
WELCOME BACK!

THIS IS
NO DREAM MY
LIFE AND THE
NIGHTMARE IS
ABOUT TO END
KING CONAN!
ON THE WAY
TO THE TRAY
DANGER!

RUFIO
HAS
LEFT
HE
WOW

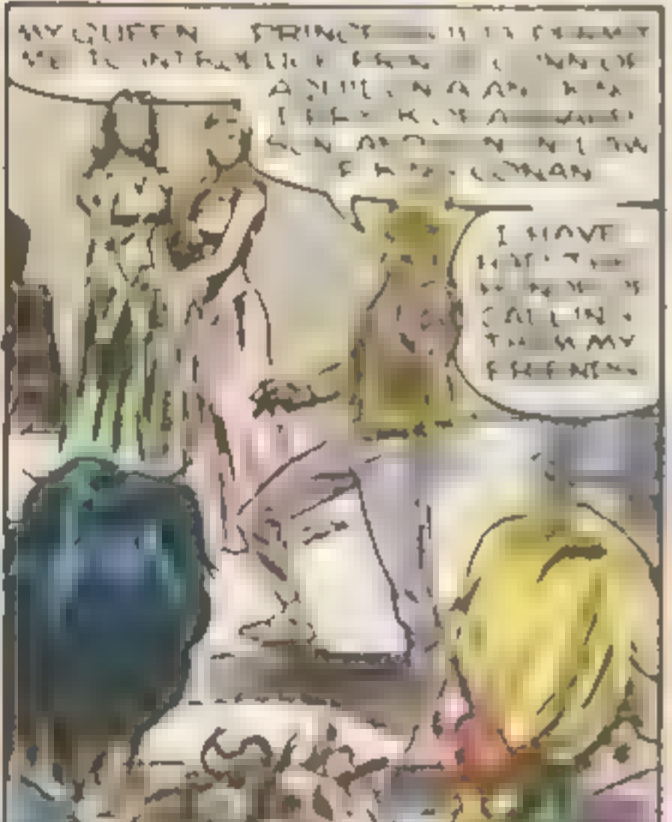


BY YOUR
CONN, THE
IS
BLIND!

AYE, DERYCK, AND
BEAUTIFUL.

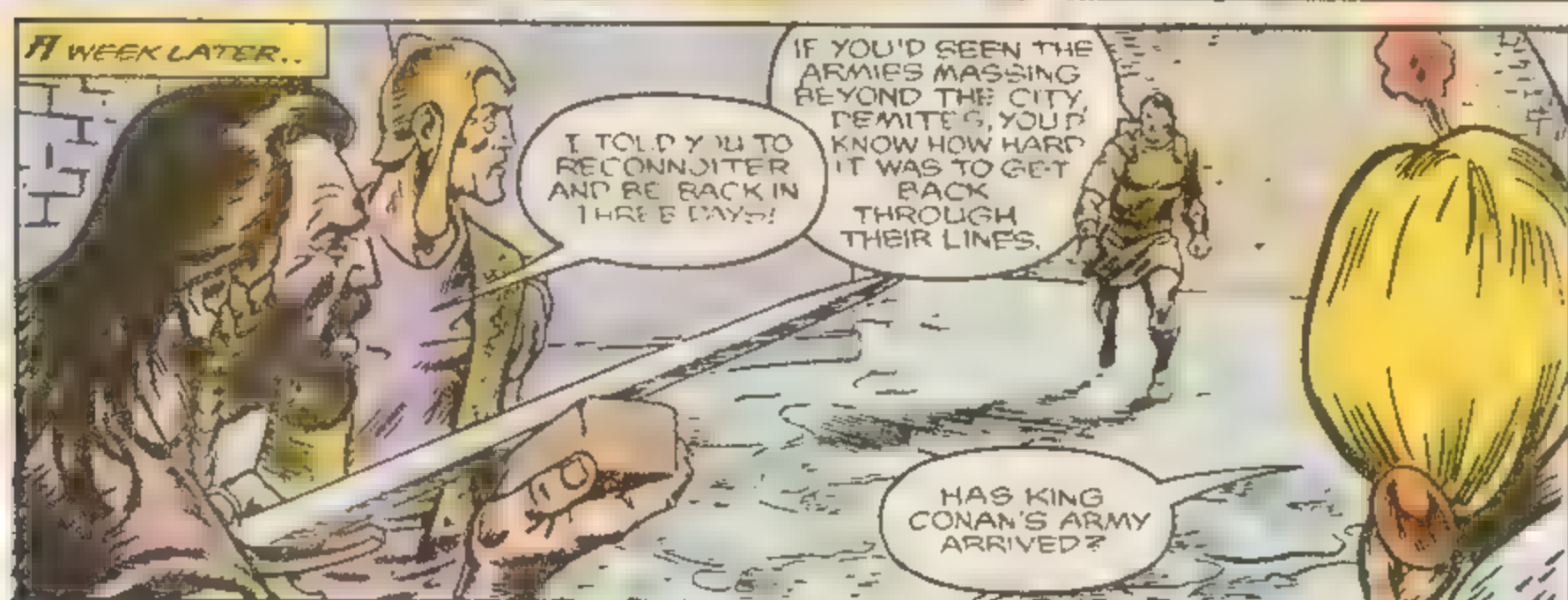
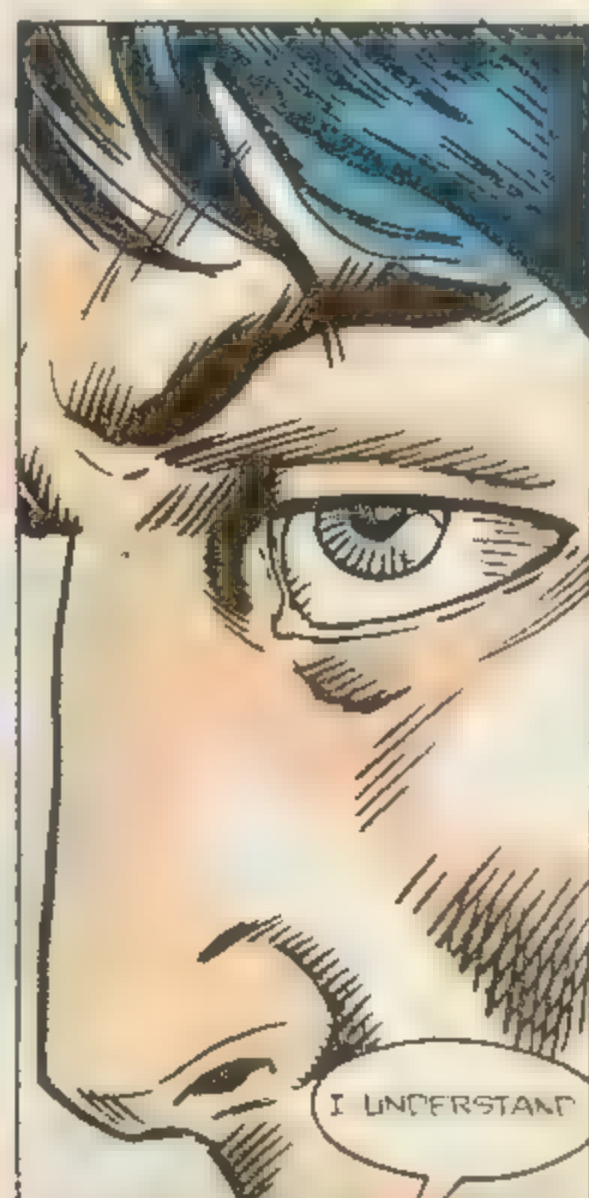
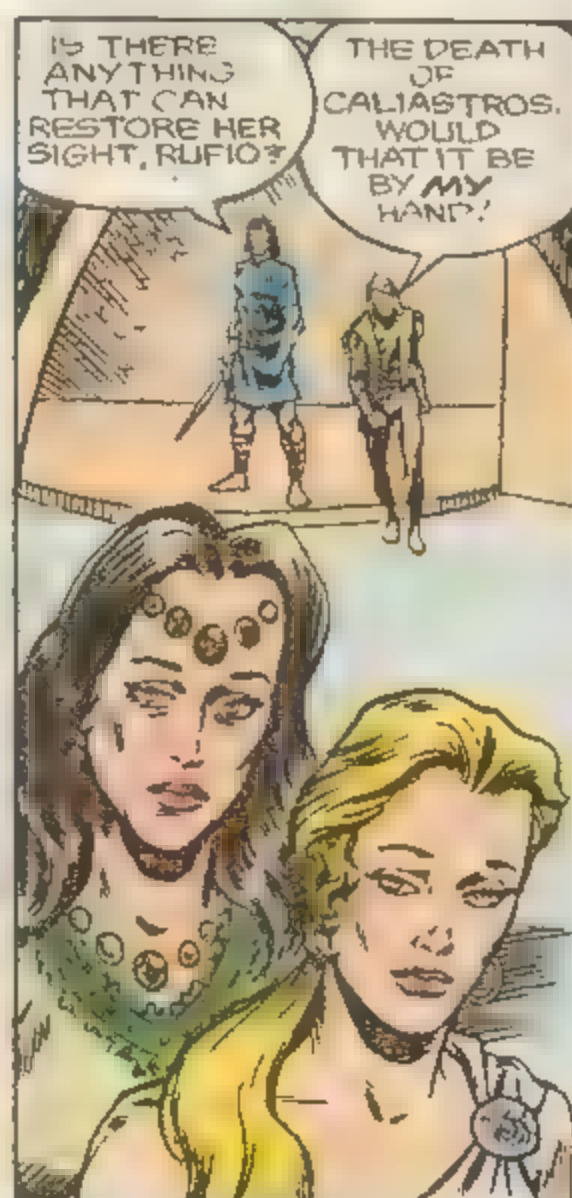
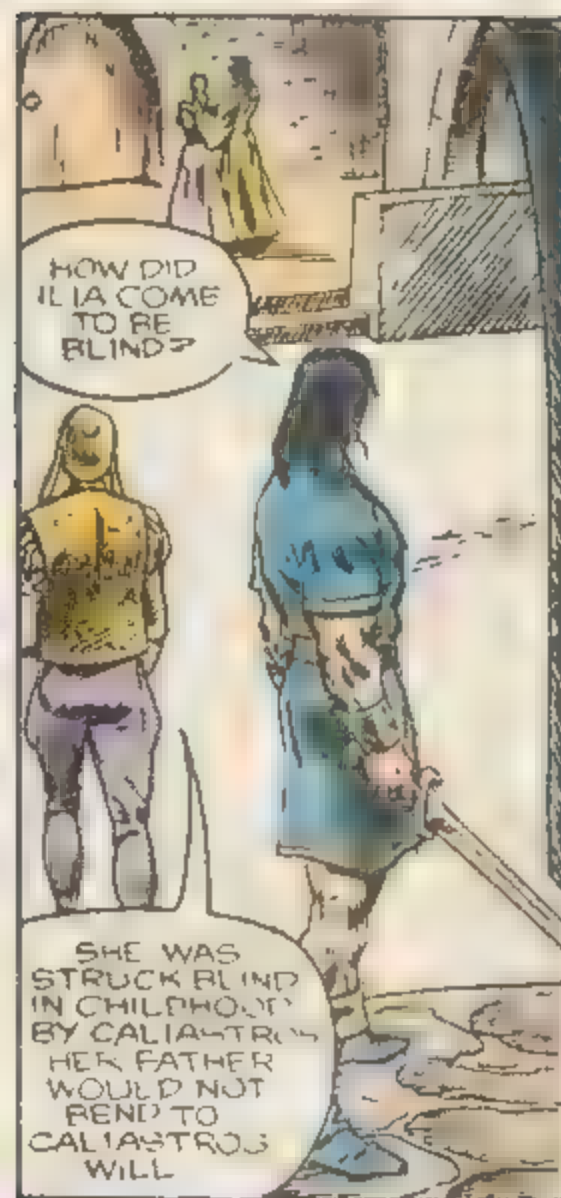
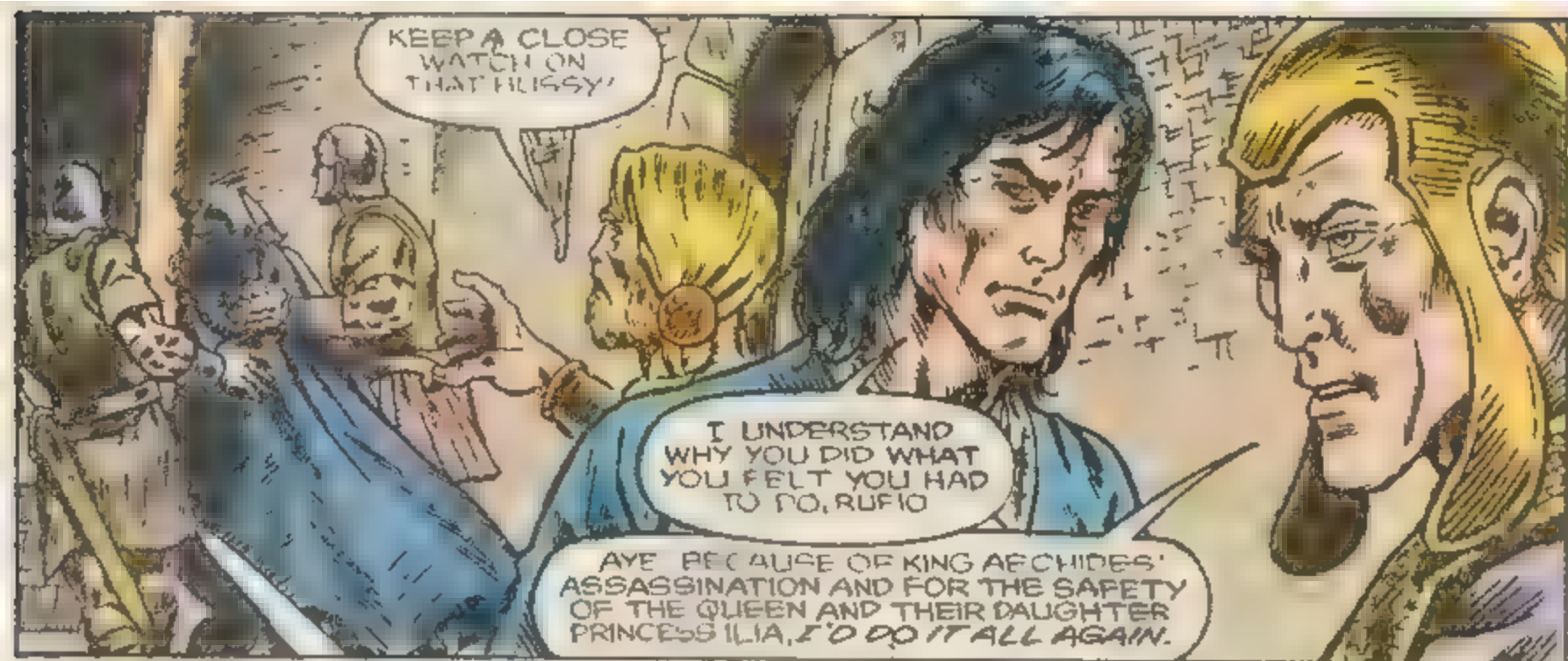


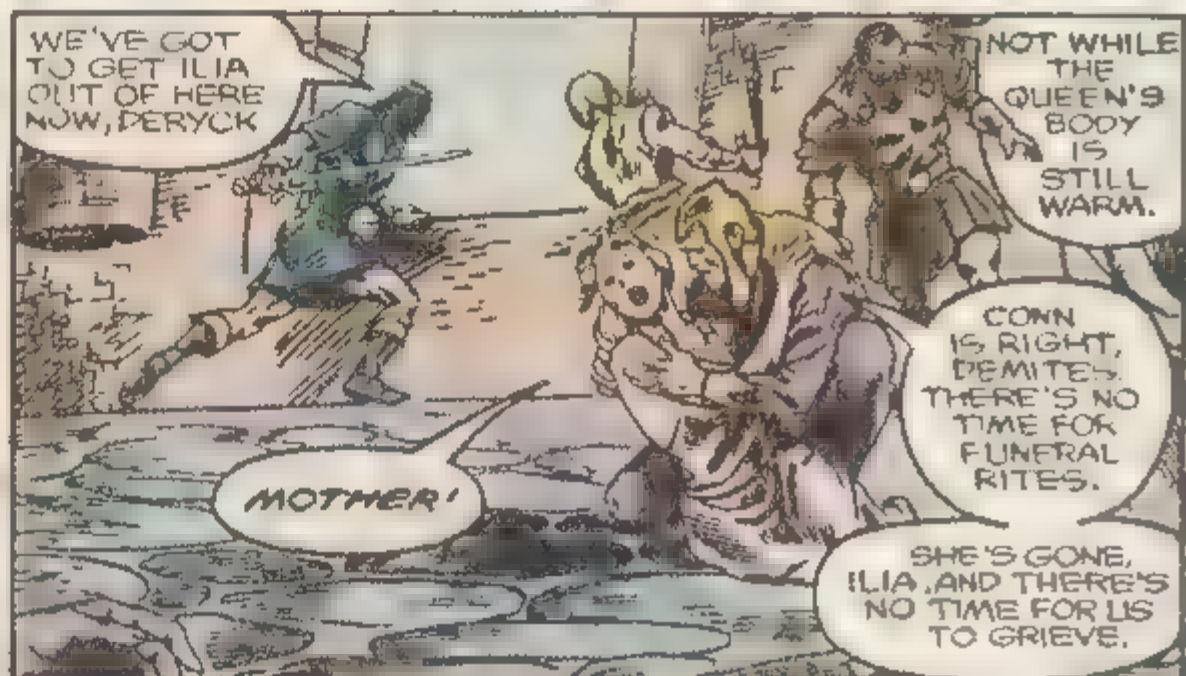
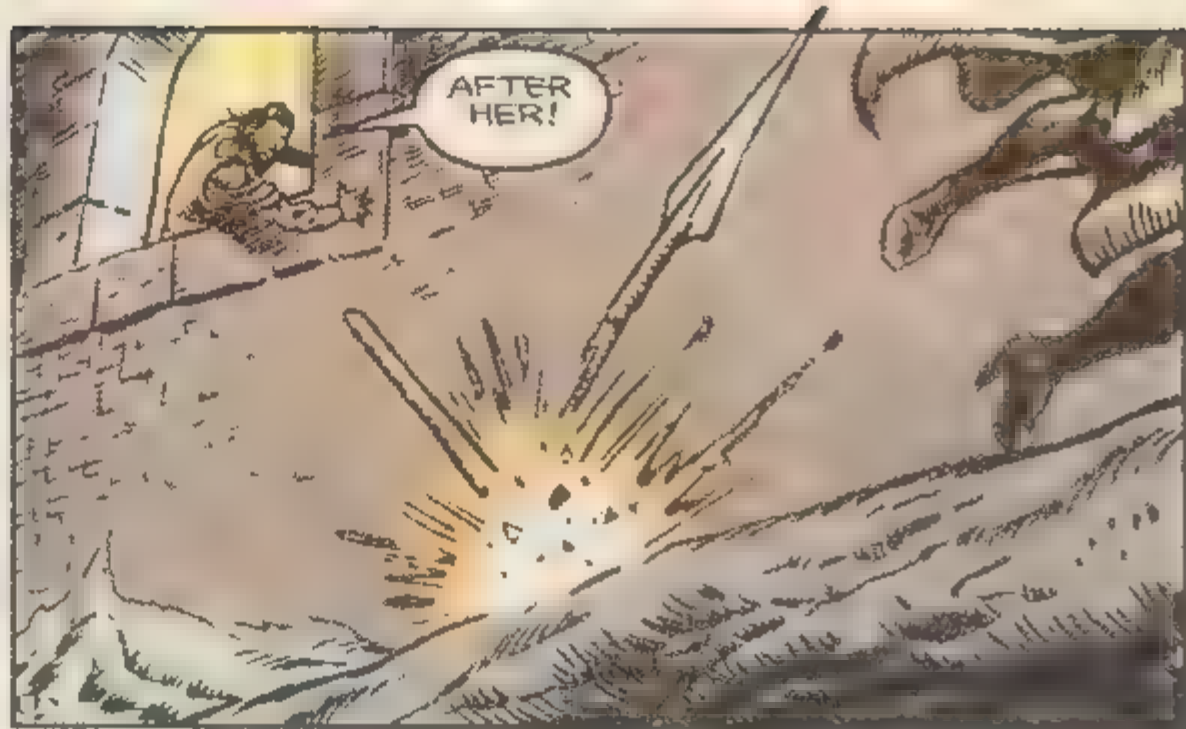
YOU DON'T
HAVE TO WHISPER
STRANGERS I AM
ACCUSTOMED TO
MY BLINDNESS



MY QUEEN PRINCE... I HAVE
VE TO INTERVIEW FOR... I KNOW
AND I KNOW... I
I KNOW... I
AND I KNOW... I
AND I KNOW... I

I HAVE
LEFT THE
WOW IS
CALLING
THE WAY
FRIENDS

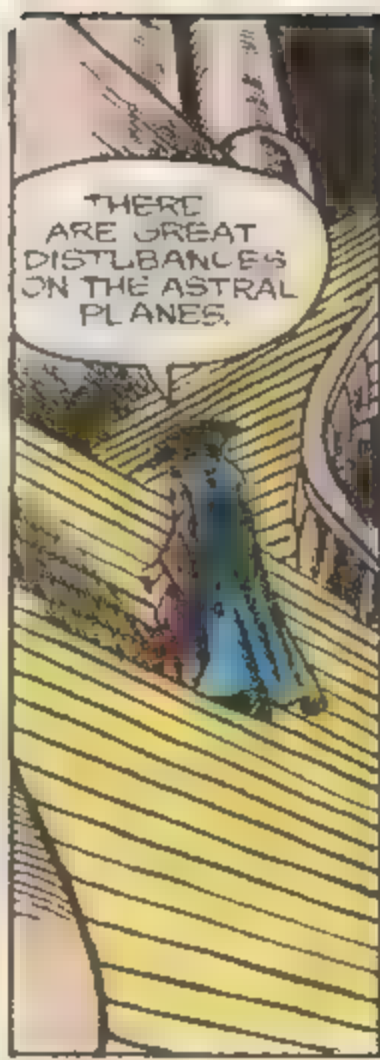








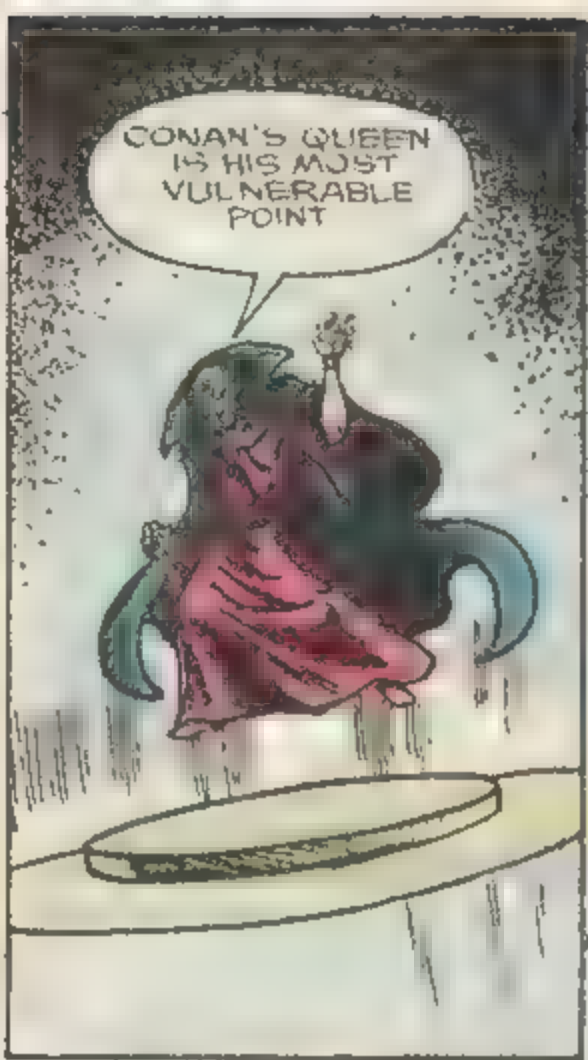
THE STARS
ARE
ALIGNED



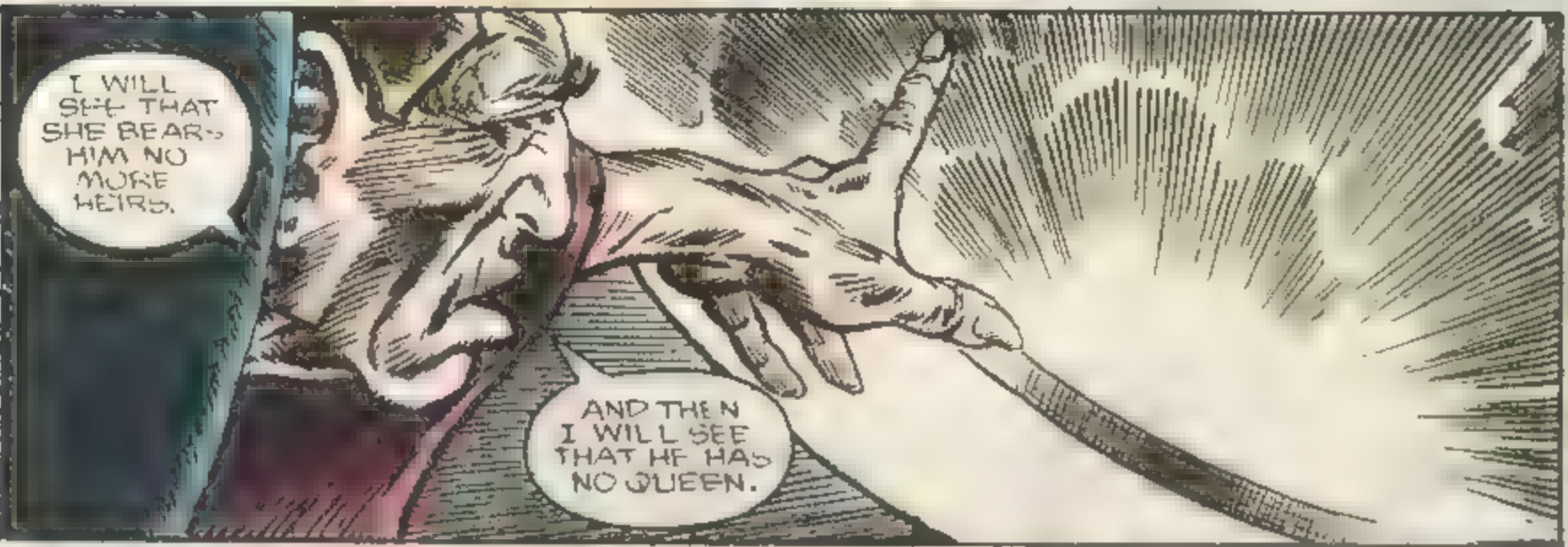
THERE
ARE GREAT
DISTANCES
ON THE ASTRAL
PLANES.



TONIGHT I
UNLEASH THE
FORCES OF
DARKNESS.



CONAN'S QUEEN
IS HIS MOST
VULNERABLE
POINT



I WILL
SEE THAT
SHE BEARS
HIM NO
MORE
HEIRS.

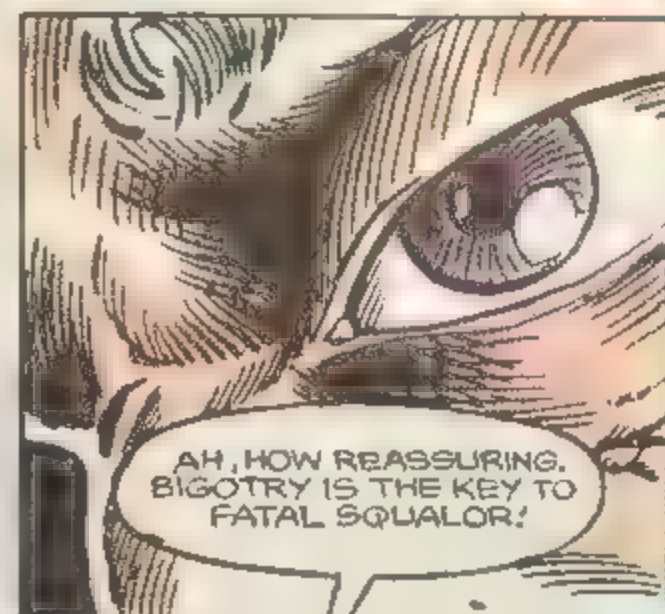
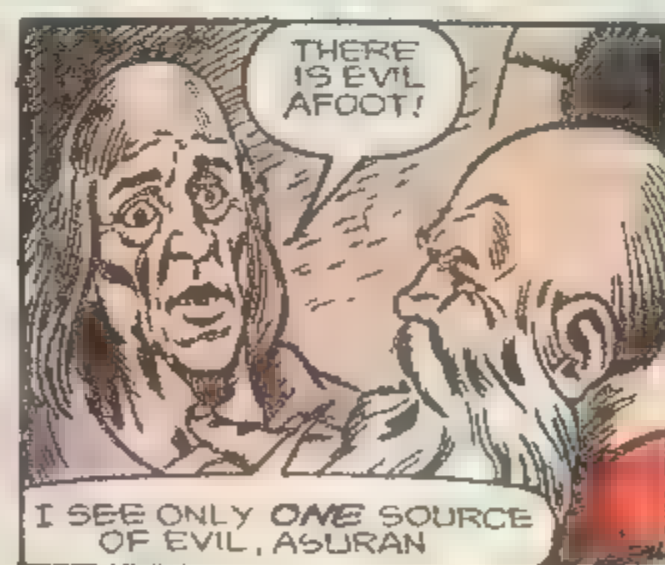
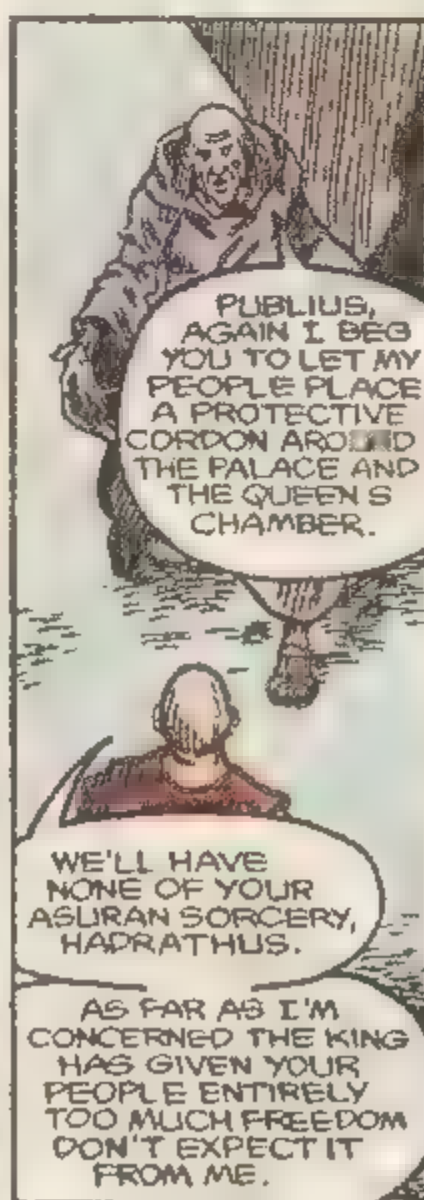
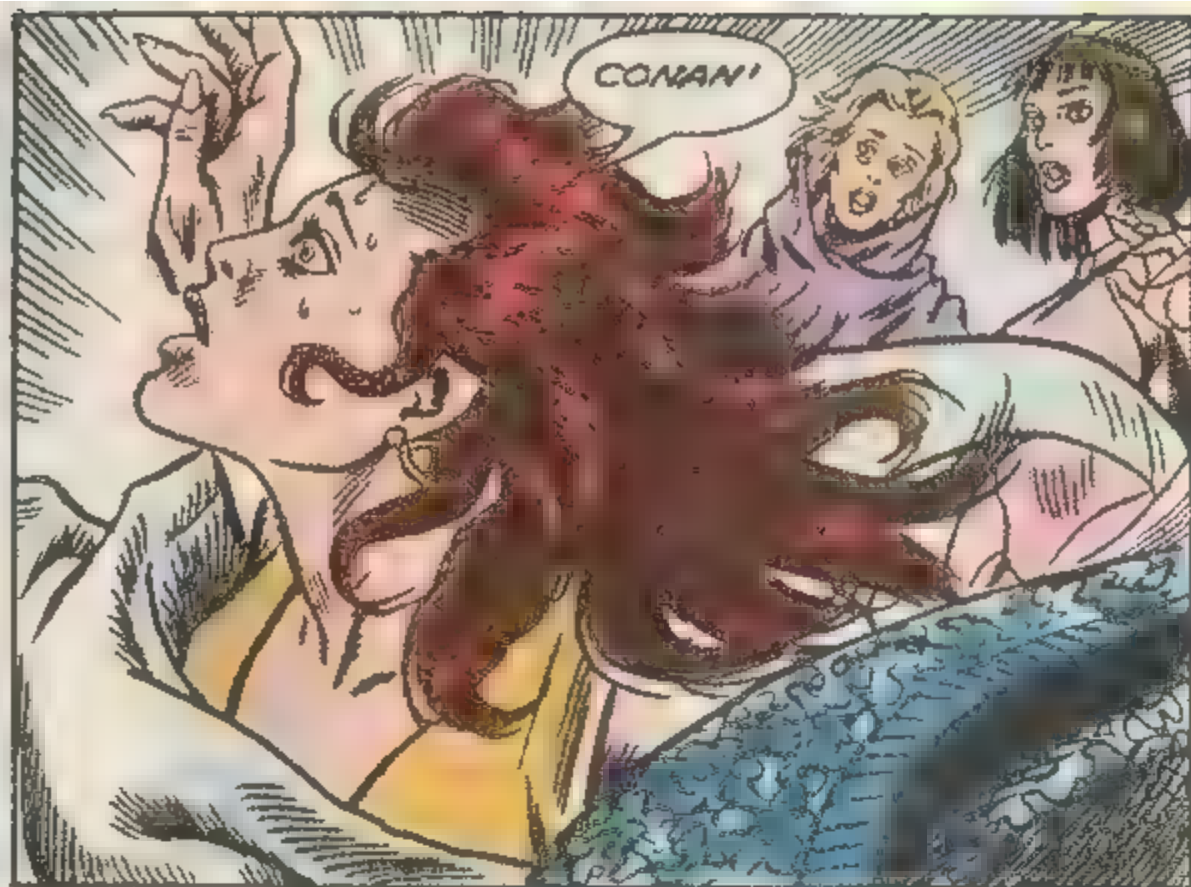
AND THEN
I WILL SEE
THAT HE HAS
NO QUEEN.



SHE HAS
NO GODS TO
PROTECT
HER..



SHE'S RESTING
WELL, ALTHOUGH
HER TIME
IS NIGH



ON THE ROAD BEYOND
ARBITANA...

HOLD ON, MY
PRINCESS. WE HAVE
MANY LEAGUES
TO TRAVEL.

WE MUST
FIND MY
FATHER'S CAMP.
LET'S HOPE THE
SENTRIES DON'T
TAKE US FOR
THE ENEMY.

LISTEN!
HORSES AND
ARMOR!

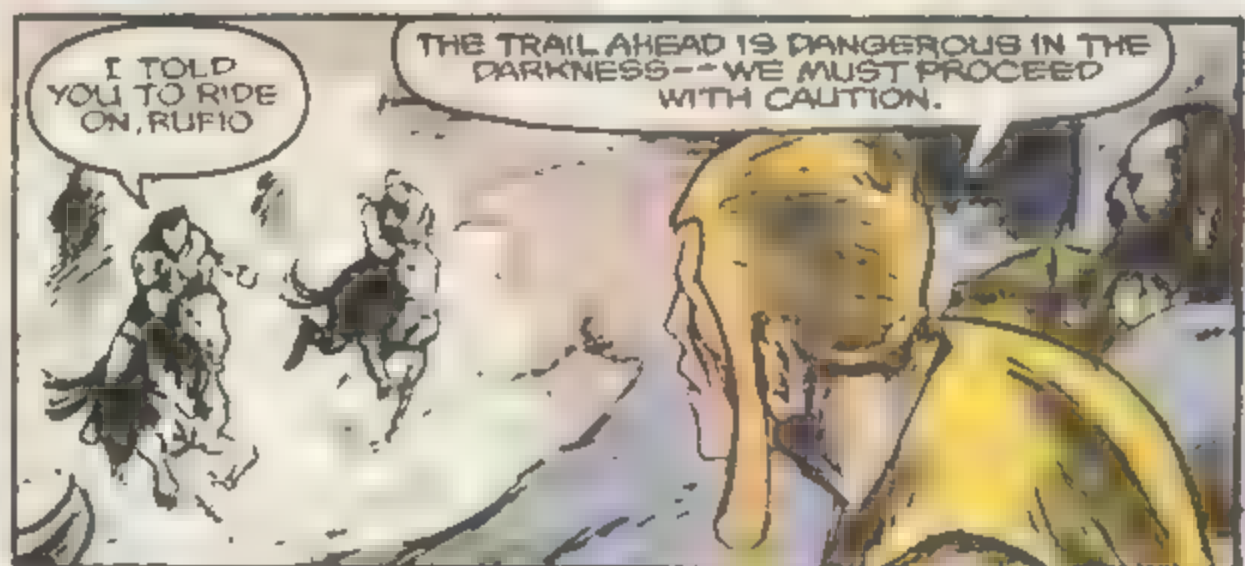
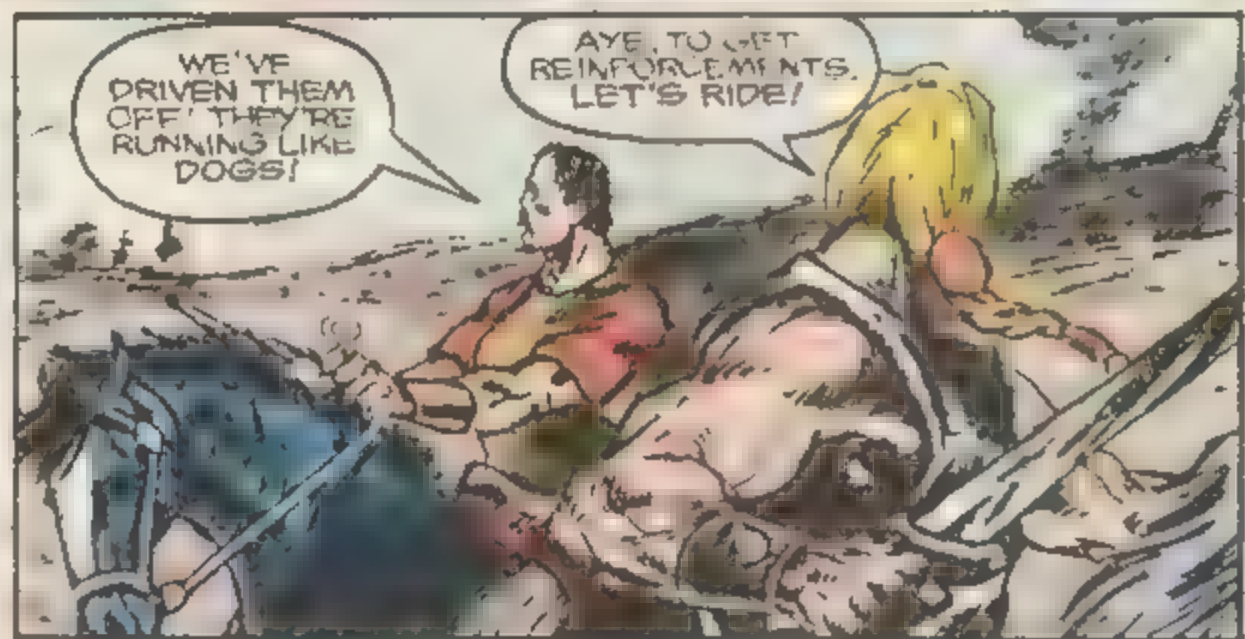
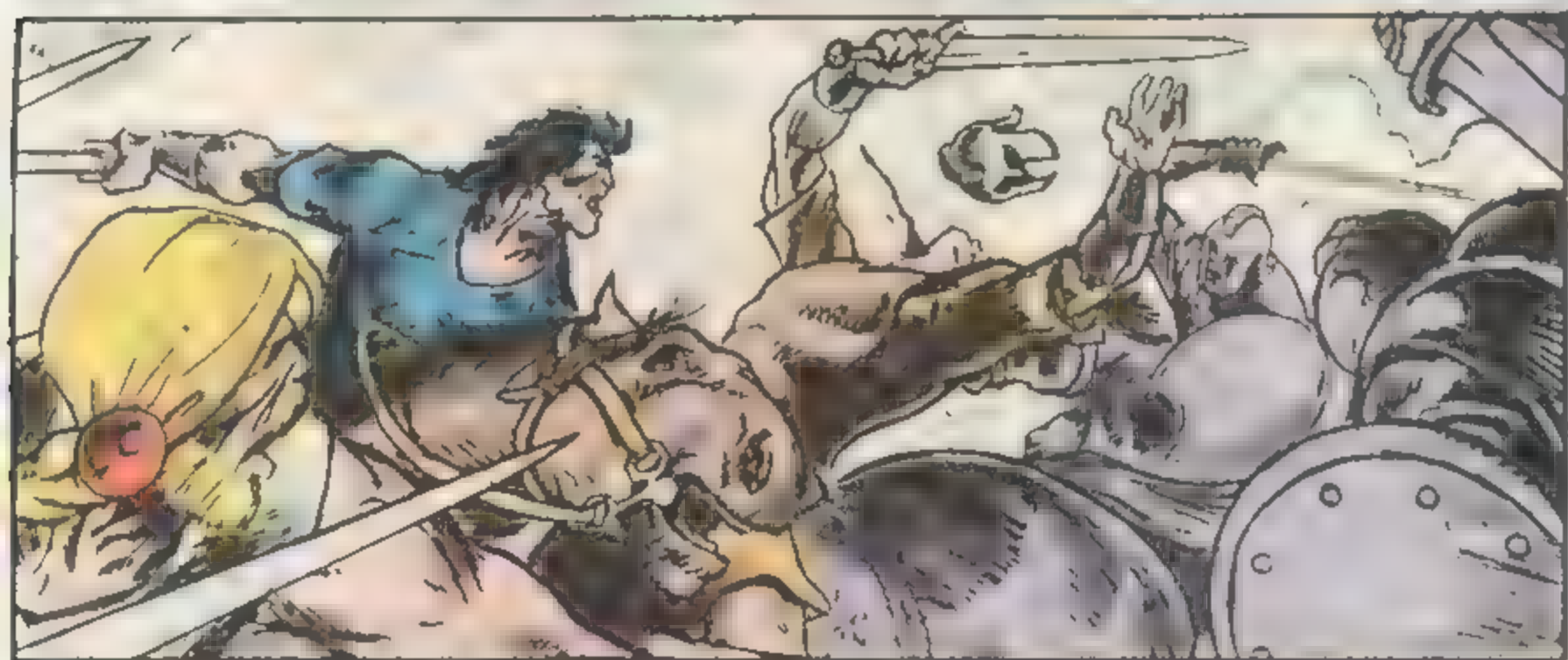
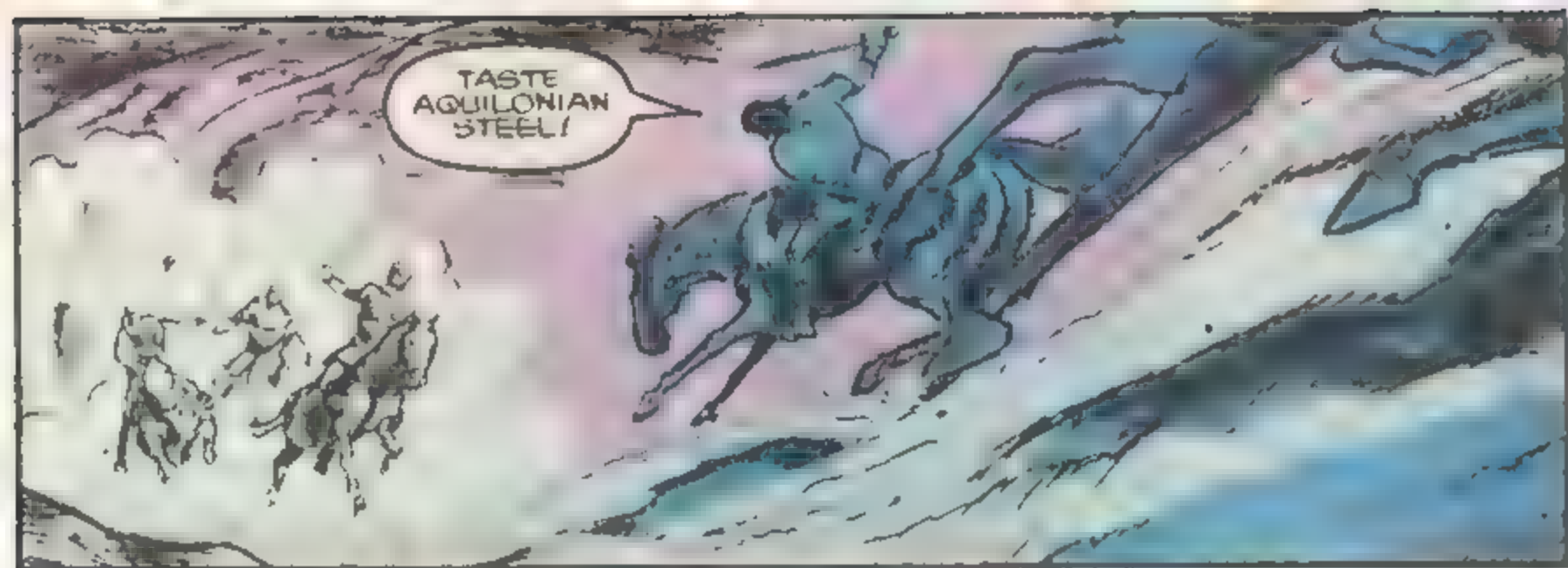
AN ENEMY
PATROL!

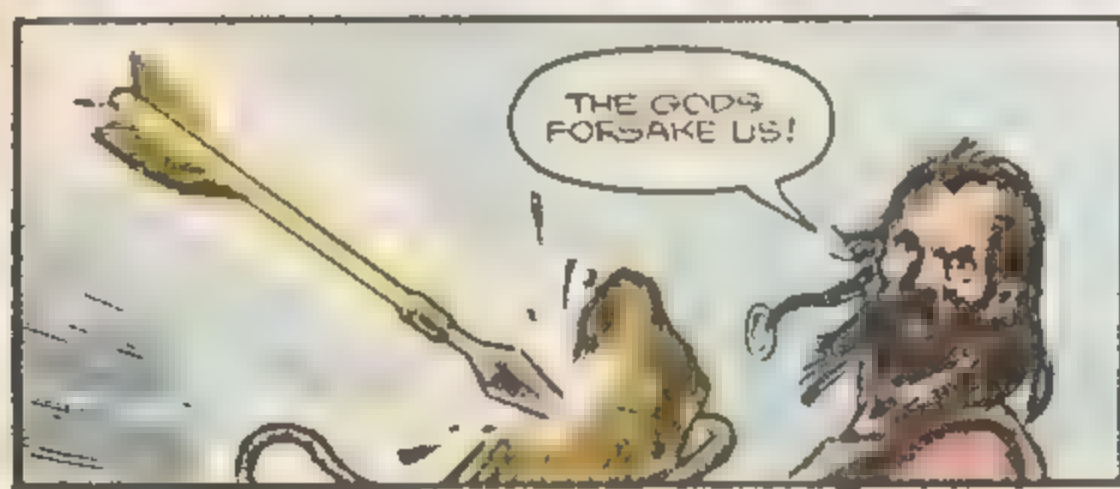
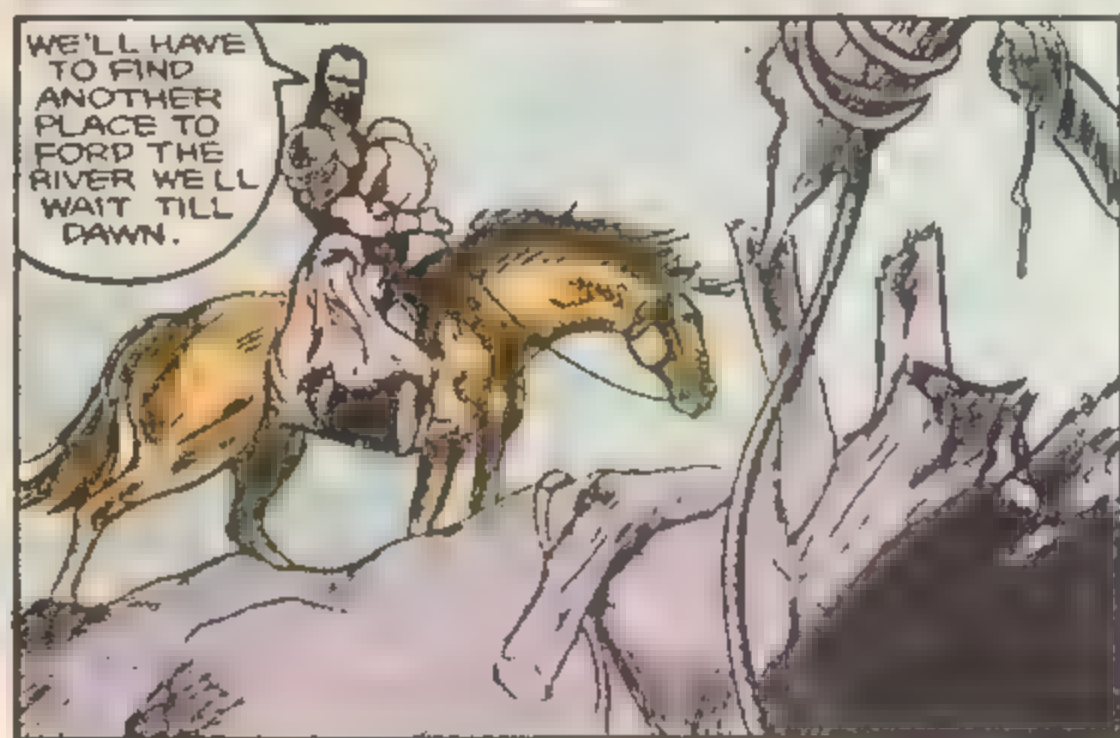
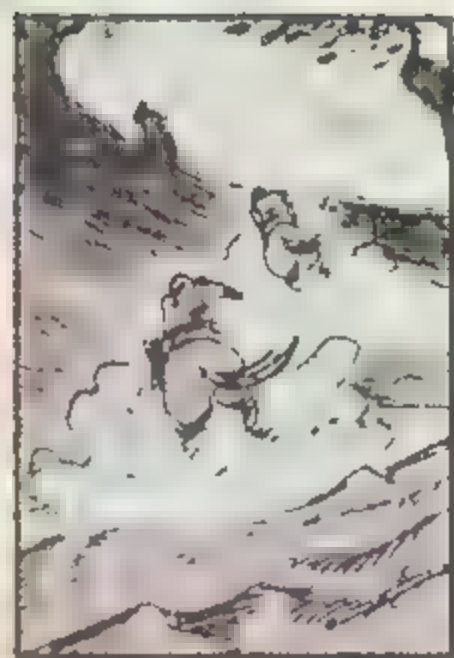
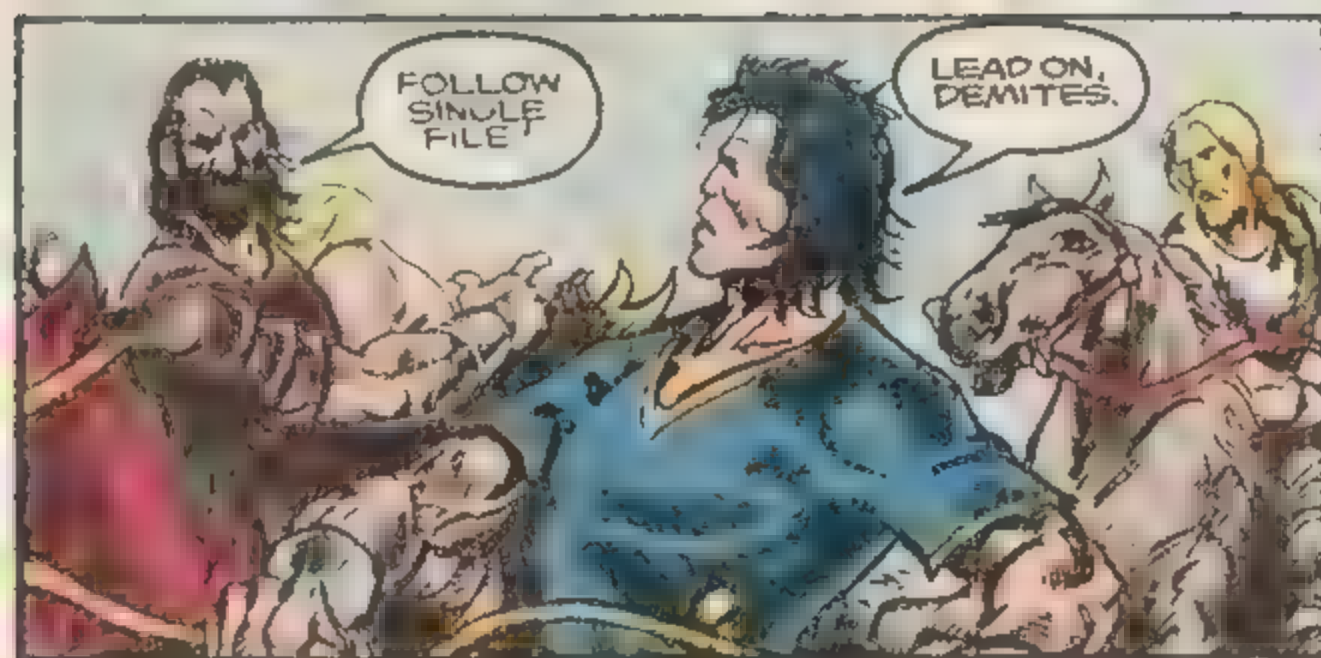
HEAD
FOR THE
MOUNTAIN
TRAIL!

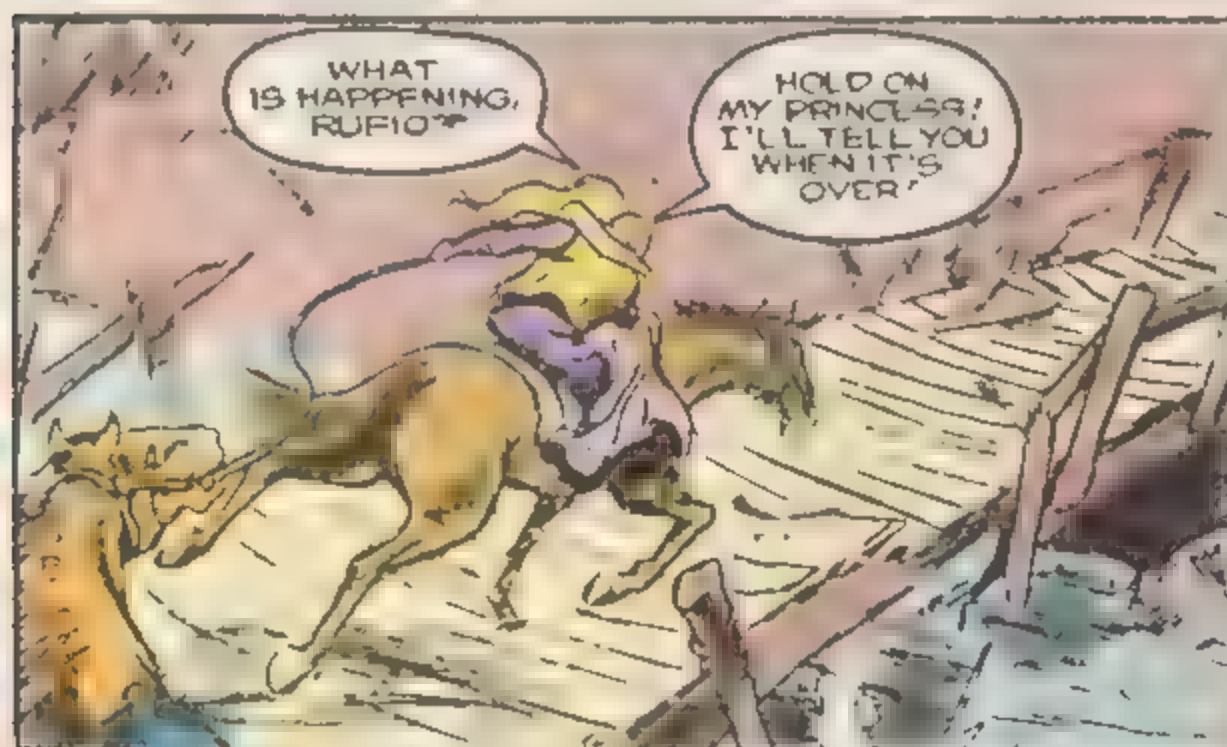
WHAT WILL YOU DO?

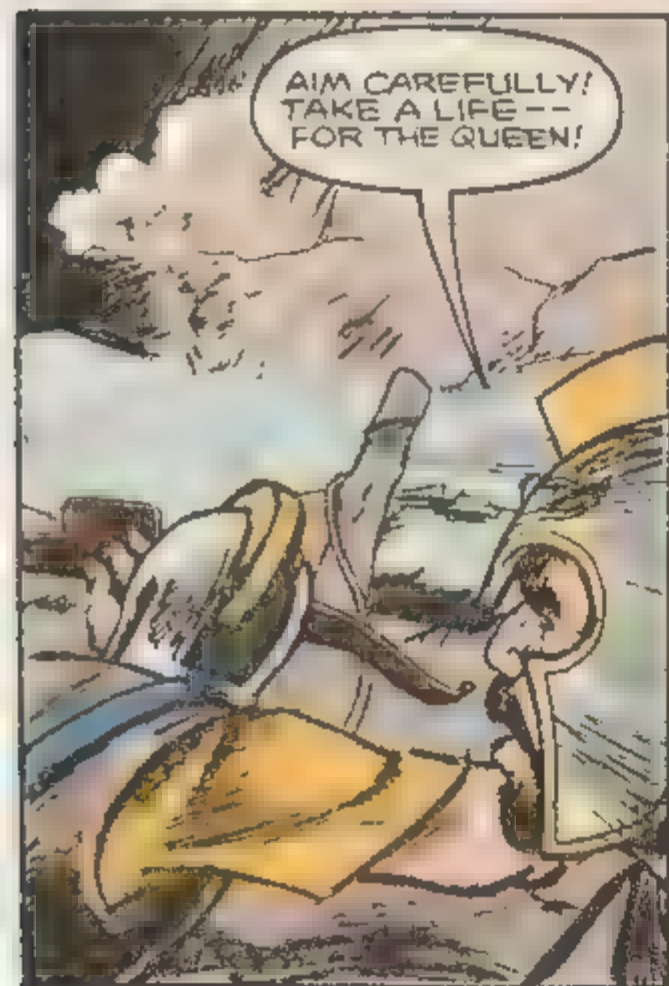
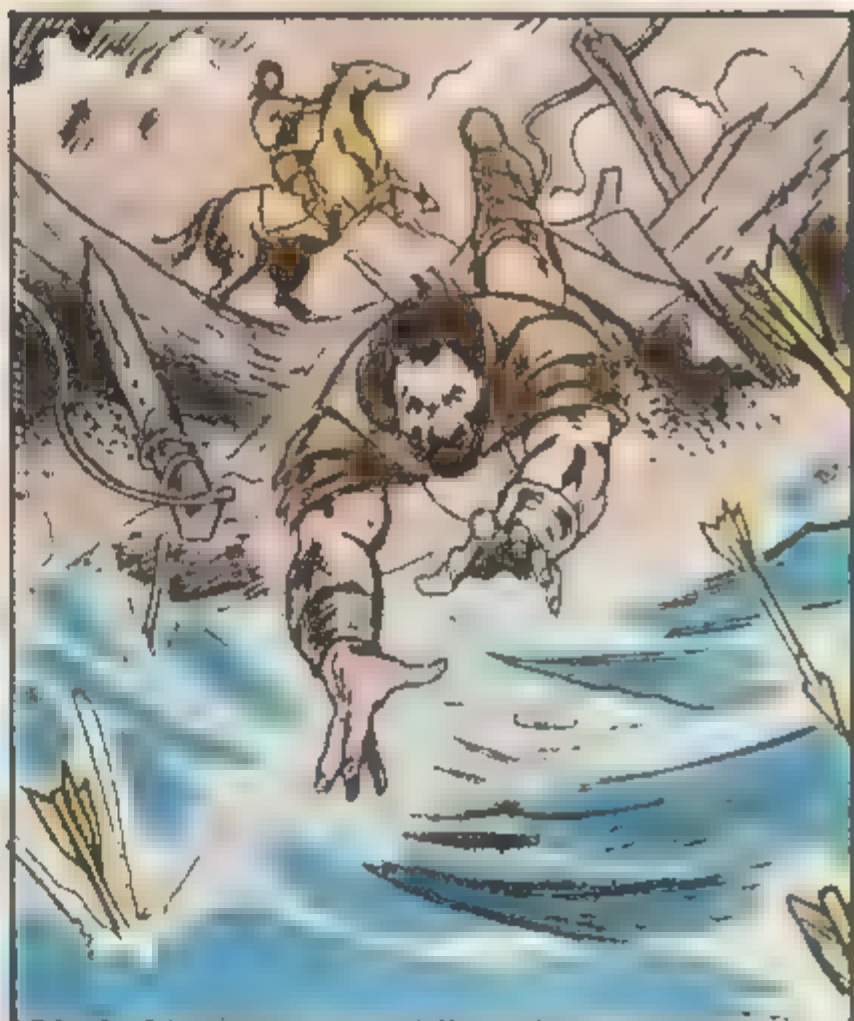
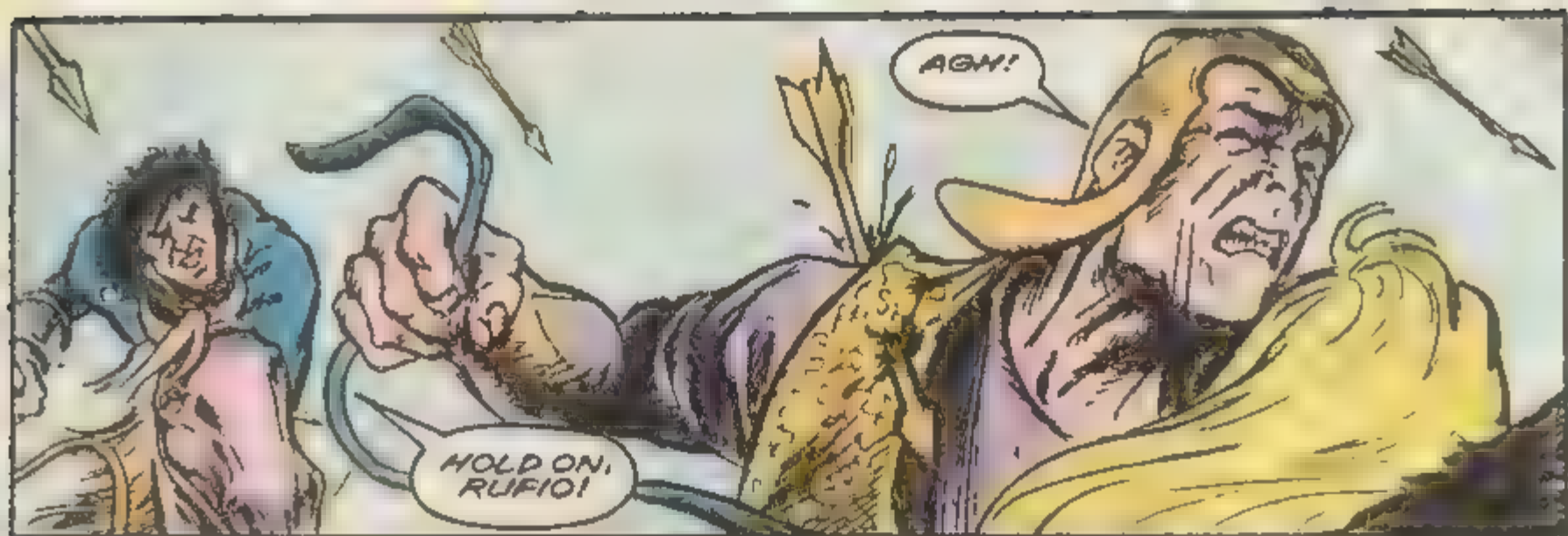
YOU KEEP ON--
WE SHALL
DISTRACT THEM

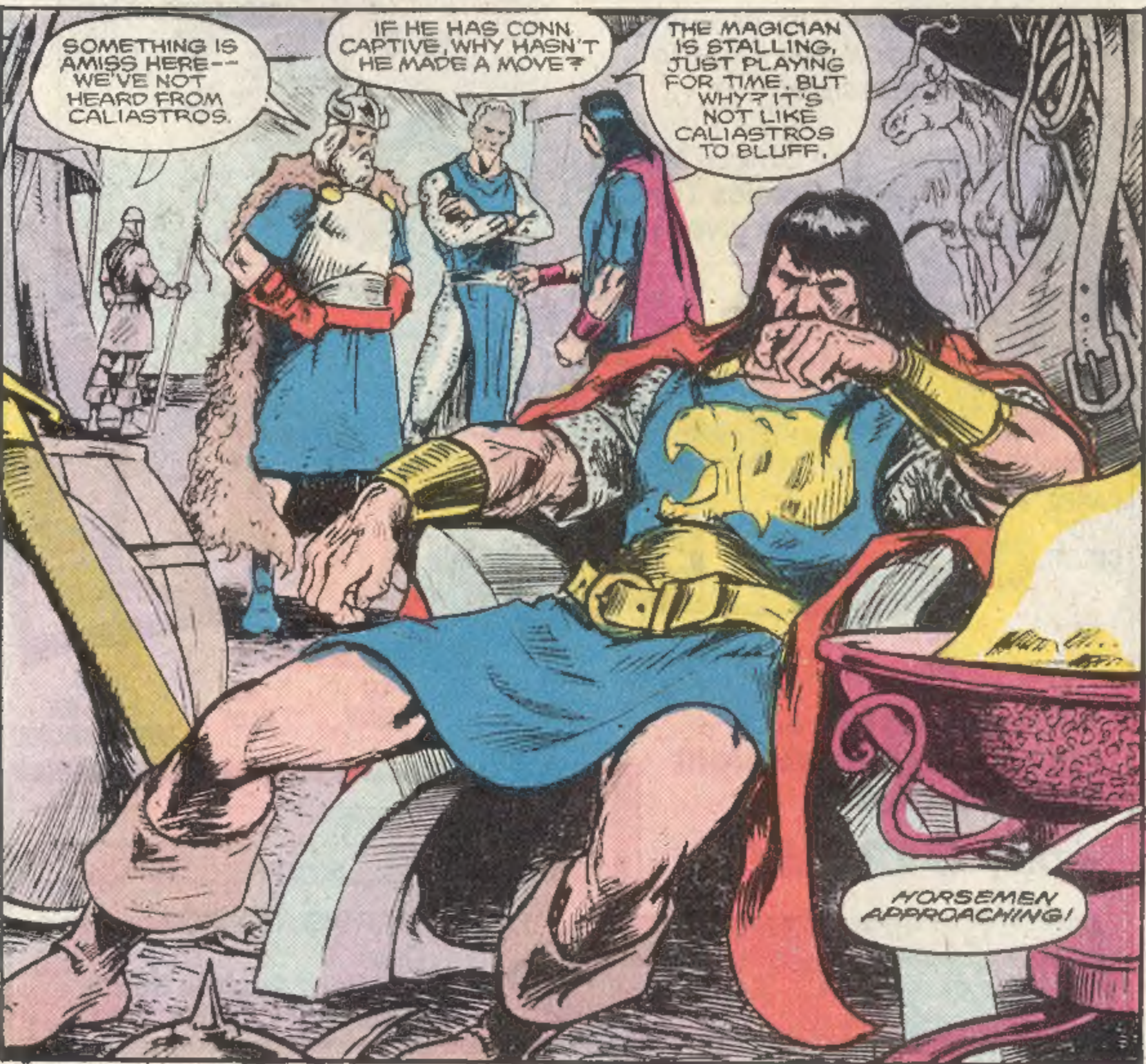
RIDE ON AND DON'T
LOOK BACK!

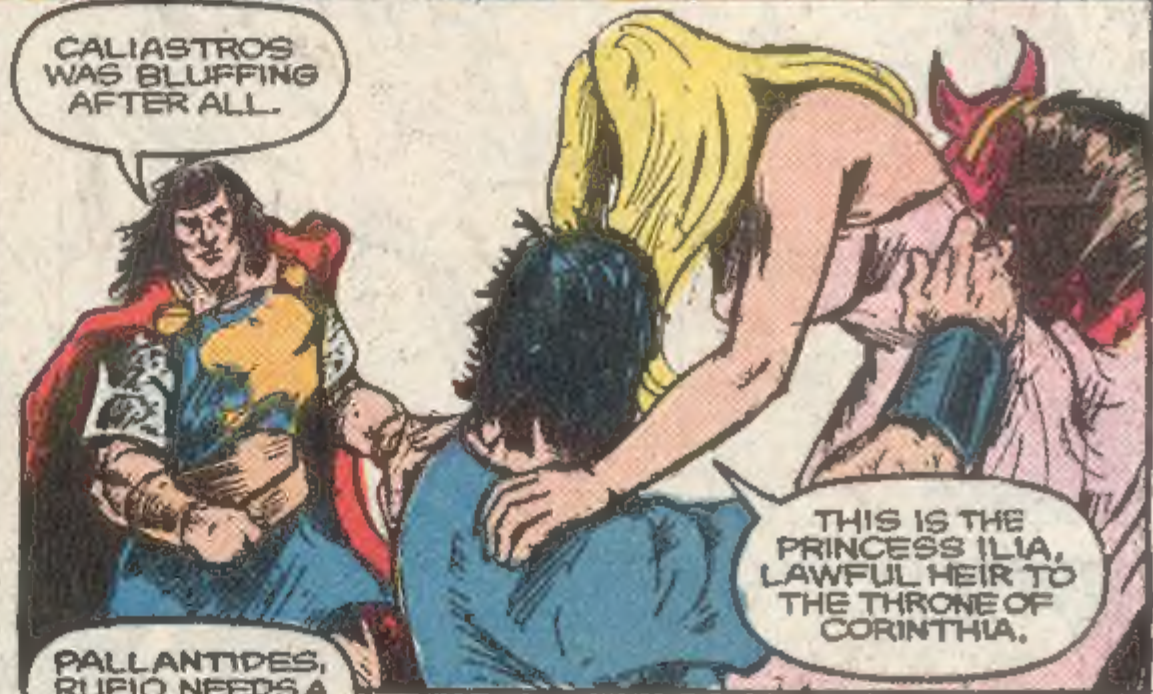


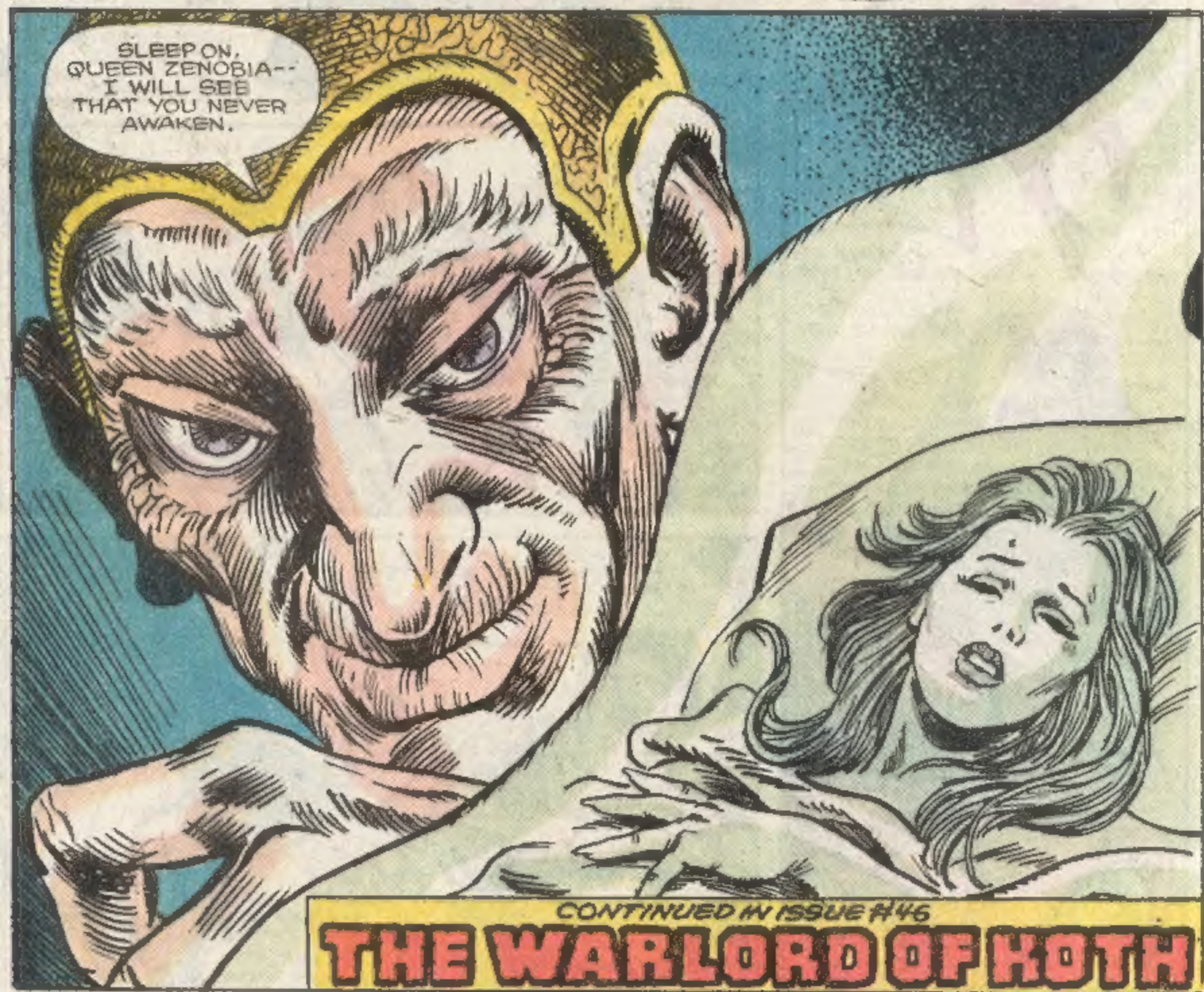










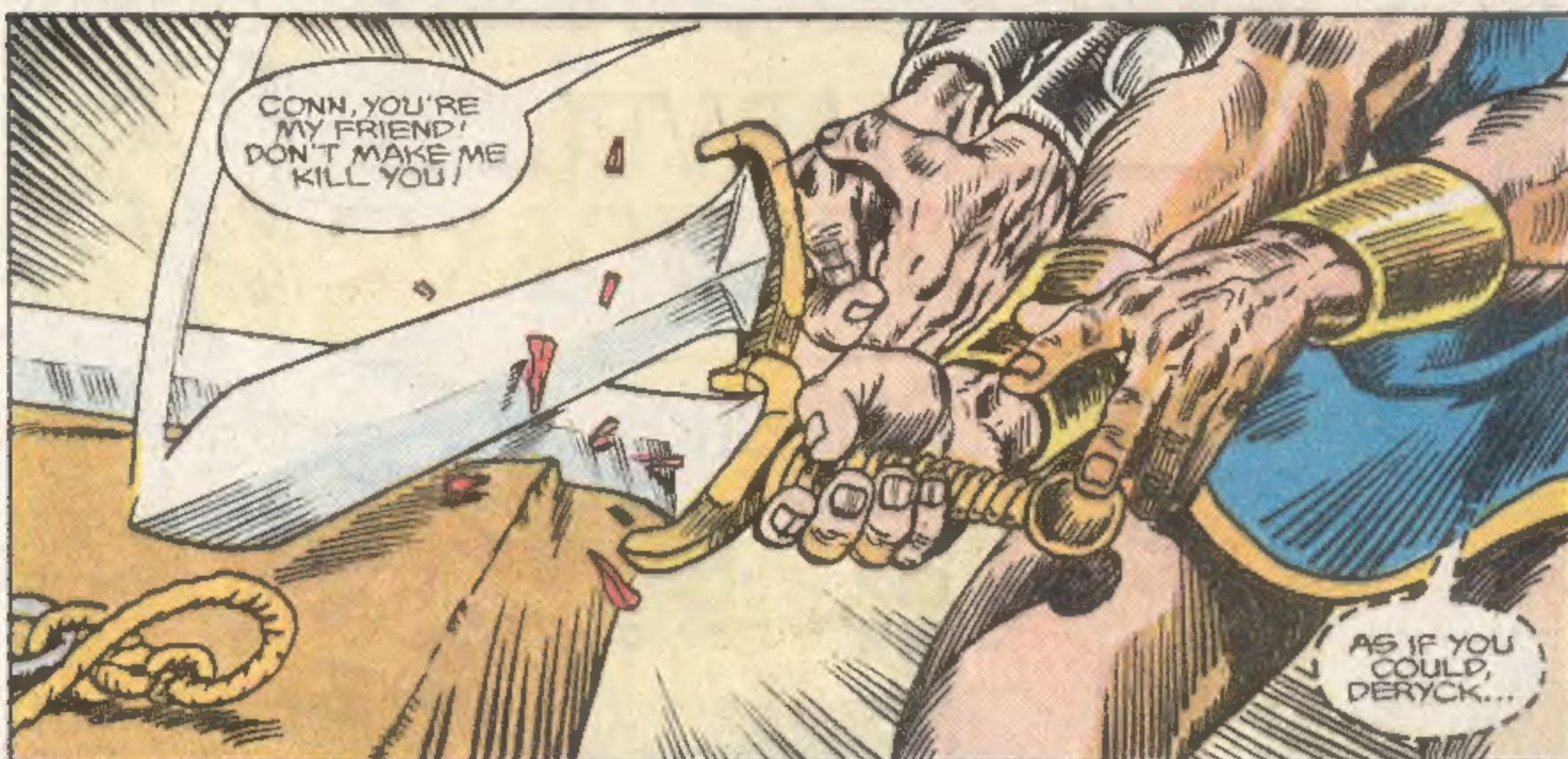


KING CONAN

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MICHAEL ROCKWITZ
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Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!



Dear Dog Brothers,

Why in Ymir's name does a victim of an attack always scream "Agheeee"? Inquisitive minds want to know!

Ted "the Nuke" Huang
Weston, Ontario

That's the way writer Don Kraar chooses to spell the sound of a scream. You're onto something here, though — we could be a bit more inventive, hmmm? People scream, shriek, bellow, yell, shout, whimper, etc., and these would all have different spellings.

Dear Creators of Conan,

I have been reading CONAN THE KING (KING CONAN) since issue #10 and when I finished that issue, I went directly to a used comic store to buy all the back issues I missed. Though I have almost all issues of this title, one thing has remained relatively consistent, and usually the editor and/or the editor in chief gives the readers fair warning, so I was shocked when I picked up my beloved CONAN THE KING and found its price had been raised. So I have three questions for you:

1.) Why did the price jump?

2. Why, in issue #43, was the letters page called King Conan instead of Conan the King?

3.) Finally, what is a No-Prize and how do you win one, if indeed they do exist?

Well, now that I have yelled and screamed and pulled my hair out, I have a few good remarks to make. The art, as usual, is superb, and the story is getting better and better. The wars (despite what Stephen Hill of Madison, CT, said) are still great. Now I leave you with another two questions:

4.) When, between CONAN THE BARBARIAN and CONAN THE KING, did Conan become a king?

5.) What happened between the time Conan became a samurai and the time he appeared in Aquilonia?

Well, until Conan the King gets a sex change. Make Mine Marvel!

Your friend (and mine),
Brian Crecente
El Paso, Texas

1.) Prices jumped on all Marvel comic books which contain licensed characters (this means that someone outside of Marvel owns the copyrights on these characters). It happened suddenly, or we would have given prior notice.

2.) We liked the way it sounded — don't you?

3.) You win a No-Prize if you spot an "error," and use genuine wit and reason to explain why it's not really a mistake.

4.) You can find out this and much more by reading the original Robert E. Howard Conan titles (short stories and novelettes mainly), which are available in paperback at most popular bookstores.

5.) Conan is not a Samurai! Samurais existed in Japanese history, much "later" than Conan's imaginary era.

Dear Conan Chroniclers,

First off, I'd like to say that lately CONAN THE KING has become a boring ancient war comic. How long is this boring war going to go on? The art is mediocre and needs improvement. Maybe it's the inker, or maybe it's Mike Docherty himself, I don't know.

The way this war went, I kept guessing correctly exactly what was going to happen. And please, not that big mean, nasty wizard thing again, please. This is almost as bad as the monsters in the early CONAN THE KING issues. How about a real story, huh?!? Just a good, plain, exciting story (bad choice of words there).

Out of all the KING CONAN and CONAN THE KING issues of the past and present, the best are #19 through #28. After these, the stories went downhill. The artwork got weaker and weaker. Then, with issue #31,

the fabulous Kaluta covers ended as well. Abandon ship, huh? I'll tell you that I wasn't really into Conan (except for an occasional SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN here and there) until I went to a friend and borrowed KING CONAN and CONAN THE KING from issue #8 on. I bought #8, #17, and #19-28. These were the best CONAN THE KINGS ever.

Now to the book itself. Conan is getting older and the way he is, it doesn't surprise anyone that he goes looking for trouble. He never was a good match for Zenobia. She's too royal, proper, and nice for him. He should have gone after Red Sonja. She is, was, and always will be the best mate for Conan (I think she knows it). But we mustn't forget Valeria. Valeria was Conan's first real love. But unfortunately she's gone to Crom (or is that Mitra?).

Also, what happened to Lou Dze and Kang Sho, the son she had by Conan? You guys just forgot them for two years now! Conn's doing well and is interesting enough, but I wish (after this dumb war) he'd go out on his own some more.

So, is CONAN THE BARBARIAN and/or SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN going to lead up into CONAN THE KING some day? Conan's adventures seem endless. Maybe you should start all over again. And how about a mini-series on Conn done by Alan Zeienetz, Roy Thomas, and Michael Kaluta (who is far better than Barry Smith, I think). And kill off Rufio and Taurus; they're both pretty dumb characters.

Sincerely,
Ali Ahmed
Oakland, California

Some people like the new stories better than the old ones, Ali. We can't please all the people all the time... but we try!

Thanks for all your suggestions. And by the way, Taurus did get killed off. Twice! And as for Rufio, well, wait and see.